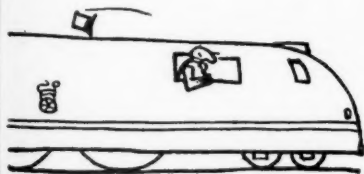


CHARIVARIA

MR. KHRUSHCHEV's suggestion that the nations should combine to loft a "commonwealth" of sputniks into space struck a nicely co-operative note, but must have set a lot of readers leafing through Russian phrase-books to see whether the word he actually used was "soviet."

THEY must also have wondered why, when he had to pause for forty minutes in his eighteen-thousand-word speech because of hoarseness, the interval was not filled in with the familiar "(enthusiastic and prolonged applause)." Perhaps it was for fear of the demoralizing effect of an enthusiastically applauding audience having to pause because of hoarseness.

WITH its wage claim coming to the boil the N.U.R. is ready to make the most of any hint of an increase in its



members' cost of living, so British Railways seem not to have timed too well their introduction of a new diesel locomotive "so cleanly equipped that the driver can come to work in his best suit."

BUT at any rate they are luckier than the G.P.O., whose campaign to persuade householders to install larger letter-boxes seems to be coinciding with the *Sunday Times'* gradual return to a manageable size.

New proposals for expanded science accommodation at Birmingham

University include parking space for a thousand students' cars. This will be all right until the first batch of graduates, off to their £600-a-year jobs, sigh and leave them there.

THE Liverpool cinema manager who held a special showing of *Robbery Under Arms* for convicted criminals only, saying that it would "do good because



it shows that trying to beat the law is a fool's idea," seems to have been out of touch with practically everything except the need to keep breaking new ground in the publicity racket.

THE same applies to the member of Portsmouth Corporation's transport committee who has tried to point the way out of countrywide bus difficulties by suggesting that Portsmouth's "nearly empty" buses might be filled if fares were reduced.

The Electrical Trades Union is meeting resistance from its members in

WORKERS STRIKE FOR MORE PAY
TO PAY FOR THE STRIKE FOR MORE
PAY TO PAY FOR THE OTHER STRIKE
FOR MORE PAY TO PAY FOR THE
STRIKE BEFORE THAT

its attempt to raise union dues in order to recoup its strike-depleted funds, and it would be unwise to write this off as

only a new twist in the old spiral; if the E.T.U. isn't careful it will have an unofficial strike on its hands.

READING about Canadian difficulties in training Eskimos for work on radar stations in the Arctic, British employers must have been glad to know that there are some labour problems they do not have to deal with. There is, for instance, no Eskimo word for "week." On the other hand there is probably none for "forty-hour" either.

THE B.B.C. must have been pleased when one of its own programmes was picked up at a radio station on Long Island. Technically it was no great achievement, as it was caused by sunspots, but at least it was a convincing proof that the B.B.C. has its own programmes.

WITH all international attempts to agree to some sort of disarmament programme seemingly doomed to failure



it may well be time for private individuals to take what action they can; a beginning, at any rate, has been made in Sir Shane Leslie's gift of a rapier to the Rifle Brigade.

BLOW-OUT

It seemed like supererogation
When the Prime Minister rehearsed
His "Seven-point Plan to Beat

Inflation."

One point can cause a decent burst.

Doom Boom

By WILLIAM THORNTON

FASHIONS in forebodings change but foreboding remains a primary human activity. The word is defined as "having a presentiment of (usually evil)." Very few people have ever admitted to a foreboding that everything will turn out all right after all. Foreboders are practically unanimous on this point.

Some people scarcely forebode at all, and they can be recognized by the exceptional development of their eyebrow-raising muscles, since they live in a continual state of surprise at the way things turn out. On the other hand there are the professional foreboders who have permanently narrowed eyes owing to the continual effort required to read writings on walls. Professional foreboders are usually vigorous and eupeptic men, on account of the fact that they have always worked under conditions of full employment. There is no example on record of a professional foreboder having a presentiment that there will soon be nothing to forebode about.

Professional foreboders usually make a corner in some particular branch of encircling doom. Boyd-Orr, for example, became a household word amongst thousands who were attracted by the thought of the world's food supplies running out; and certain religious sects have amassed an enthusiastic following

by reiterating that the end of the world is due in about a fortnight's time. Prospects in heavy doom-mongering have weakened of recent years, because foreboding varies as the square of the distance to the doom envisaged. Inversely, this law explains why the more distant dooms such as solar cooling and inter-stellar collision, although they have always had a small and devoted following, are generally classified as "idle-bodes" or "holiday presentiments."

No special equipment or training is necessary for foreboding, and it can be carried on at any time of the day or night, outside or indoors. Besides the general, or overall, sense of impending disaster there are lesser, sectional, professional and personal disquietudes. Bodes tend with the passage of time to be caught up in the general deterioration of everything which used to be known as "progress." Thus the well-known horse-bode, which began when the first man saw the first horse, has within our own day become the horse-doom. Dismal prospects for railways, motor-cars, and—more recently—aeroplanes are growing in popular esteem; but this general flourishing of the transport bode has robbed many of us of one of our favourite presentiments, the one about men gradually losing the use of their legs. It has always been necessary to be prepared to swap bodes in mid-stream. The practised foreboder moves easily between opposing nightmares.

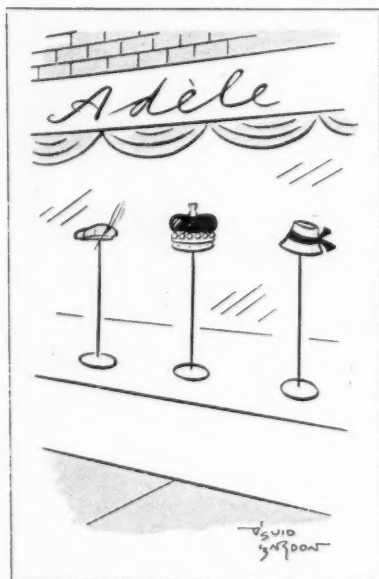
A recent lesser bode is the book bode, which is reflected in the sad statements of successful publishers and a general tendency to feel that the age of the printed word is drawing to its close. This is essentially a minority doom which will affect only such people as authors, booksellers, binders, librarians, printers, scholars, teachers, and the like; bicycle manufacturers, toothbrush designers, directors of paint-works, sewage-disposal engineers, shop-stewards and window cleaners seem at present to be deprived of any sectional doom concern, though they can of course share in the book bode and perhaps experience a mild chill at the thought of not being able to read all about it when their turn comes. Soap doom gave way to detergent boom almost overnight; and detergentmen

have now to discontent themselves with white shirt neurosis, articles in *Readers' Digest* on "Washing—Man's Greatest Enemy?" and the feeling that the last instalment of *Quatermass III* will see us globally enveloped in synthetic suds.

Students of the book bode are inclined to predict a book boom as books become involved with the culture doom of popular radio. One is not referring here to the suggestion that television may soon enable us to read books in the privacy of our own homes with Miss Sylvia Peters to turn over the pages and help us with the long words. This is on the way, as anyone knows who has watched Mr. Wilfred Pickles pretending to tell a story which he is actually reading off the cameraman's waistcoat; but the discovery of books at Lime Grove will almost certainly be followed by the more exciting discovery of picture-books, which will not help the printed word.

The coming book boom is actually bound up with the recording of books on long-playing records and a tie-up with sound-radio, itself a subject of vigorous forebodings. Once authors have discovered how to get their stuff recorded, the rest can be left to the record companies, the performing rights societies, the agents, and the plug-ologists. Authors will then be able to settle down to their old spare-time occupation of thumbing through the steam-yacht catalogues, while disc jockeys get on with Forces Requests from people like L/Cpl. Fishkin of the Rocket Booster Maintenance Regiment stationed at Evesham who has asked for a record of Roy Rich reading the fourth chapter of *Brideshead Revisited* for Mum, Dad, Ethel, Nora and Vi.

It is too early to predict the effect of all this on such things as Shaw's alphabet and the progress of the automaton which is being taught to read. Conservative foreboders are inclined to find reassurance in their central tenet, the certainty of uncertainty.



"A bad Car is of no use to anyone—sell it. We will buy it."

The Isle of Wight County Press
And sell it.



"SAY WHEN"



He Called Me a Doddering Old Fool . . .

The only possible fault to be found with the *Evening Standard's* presentation of General Sir John Kennedy's book *The Business of War* is that Mr. Frank Owen's running commentary on the General's more vexatious utterances is set below or alongside the text instead of right in amongst it. This means that it is possible for a careless reader to follow Sir John from beginning to end without the corrective of Mr. Owen's prose—and, indeed, vice versa. In the very first instalment thousands may well have read with mounting indignation how the General was frequently kept up till midnight by Churchill's lack of consideration, and entirely missed Mr. Owen's testy comment that "if Senior Staff Officers, instead of working in Whitehall, had been serving in the field . . . they would hardly have complained *there* of a twelve-hour day." *Ouch!*

No such mistake has been made in the presentation in this paper, starting to-day, of Lieut-General Sir Eustace Hatt's sensational *I Was A.P.S. to the D.D.O.B.H.* The commentary is by H. F. ELLIS, gifted amateur strategist, who called for a Second Front as early as June 1940.

I WAS having a bath in March 1942, a day that I shall always remember, when General Cleaver walked in and slumped wearily down on the dirty-clothes basket. He told me that word had just reached him from Chequers that the back of the P.M.'s neck had flushed a deep red and it looked as though his eyes might start blazing at any moment. "Dickie wants us to go up there straight away," he said, with a gesture of despair.

I put on my heavy uniform, for the second time that day, and although it was raining we set off at once by car.

Great war leader as Churchill undoubtedly was, his habit of holding conferences at Chequers did more than anything else to throw the whole military direction of the war into a state of hopeless muddle and confusion. General Wiscacre, when he was D.D.I.G.S., told me that on more than one occasion it was all he could do to get through from Putney on a Sunday evening. I myself once missed an important luncheon, at which the P.M. threatened to throw butter at General Wavell, through getting a puncture at Rickmansworth, a thing

that could never have happened had Churchill entertained at, say, Barnes or Hampton Court.

[General Hatt describes how he was summoned from his bath to a conference at Chequers, and complains that it would have been more convenient had the Prime Minister lived at Barnes. It does not seem to have occurred to him that had his own home been at Potter Hanworth (and stranger things have happened in war) the journey to Barnes would have been even longer.]

When we reached Chequers the P.M. was half-way through his second dry martini, and I made a note of it in my

diary. So, I noticed, did Alan Brooke, Dill, Gort, Winant, Harriman and one or two Dominion authors who happened to be present. Soon afterwards we went in to dinner, and I remarked that the turbot was excellent. Churchill made no reply, contenting himself with thumping the table with his fist and demanding "Who is that doddering old fool?"

Eating Quietly

I was vexed at this, but reminded myself of the agreement reached at a recent meeting of all the Service Chiefs when we had decided that the best thing to do in such circumstances was to go on eating quietly as though nothing had happened. In any case a welcome interruption occurred at this moment, an officer of quite low rank coming in to say that Roosevelt was on the line. "Tell him to go and boil his head," Churchill shouted, in no very good humour (Harriman told me later that he was always irritable when eating turbot).

[Nonsense. Churchill was often in top form during the fish course, as four or five War Diaries make clear. Apart from that, the phrase "Go and boil your head" is often used jocularly by civilians. General Hatt's failure to grasp this point is typical of the narrow service mind.]

Cleaver at once spoke up, warning

Churchill that if the message were sent in that form the war was as good as lost. The Prime Minister sat fuming for some minutes, while we all sat round anxiously writing down our impressions; but he eventually agreed to go and speak to the President, and could presently be heard demanding fourteen thousand flat-bottomed boats for a left hook up the Irrawaddy. Admiral Barraclough went white with anger, but said nothing.

[This is really terrible. Hatt seems to be unaware that Admiral Barraclough always "reddened with anger" (Official History of the War at Sea, Vol. IX). Pallor was a sign of indigestion. I don't know how we came to publish such stuff.]

A Strong Pull

Churchill returned to the table in high good humour and took a pull at his champagne that set me reaching instinctively for my fountain pen. He spoke about tanks and the need for aggressive action, maintaining that if his Chiefs of Staff had their way and waited until there was enough of everything everywhere before doing anything anywhere, civilian morale would crumble, our allies would go home, and Hitler's most serious menace would be old age. He turned to me and asked me whether I intended to make a considered reply on paper. I

had, as a matter of fact, just made a note to the effect that his spectacles were somewhat awry, but felt it would not be right, or in the country's best interests, to tell the Prime Minister this while a guest at his table. Shortly afterwards the conversation took a different turn and I escaped to bed, tired out.

Kippers

On another occasion, when staying at Chequers, I had kippers for breakfast and then went for a stroll in the grounds before returning to London. The Prime Minister, whose unaccountable behaviour added so heavily to the burden of wartime soldiering, was for once up early and shouted at me across the lawn to take my foot off his crocuses. Crushing down my feeling of resentment I went over and told him that the war could only be won if the three great principles of generalship—Conservation, Concentration and Surprise—were borne constantly in mind. But I do not think he heard me. Certainly he made no note of any kind.

[General Hatt is probably right here. There is no hint of this conversation in Churchill's "Second World War." Indeed, to be fair to the General, his name does not appear in the index.]

TO-MORROW:

IT ONLY JUST MISSED MY HEAD

Candidus Goes to Parliament

By LORD KINROSS

"I AM greatly disturbed about the state of your country," remarked Candidus sententiously, returning home on Sunday a week or two ago.

"Why so?"

"In my opinion you are on the verge of revolution. I have been listening to subversive talk of a highly inflammatory nature—publicly expressed moreover."

"Where?"

"In the Park. At Marble Arch. Before thousands."

"Ah, I understand."

"I doubt whether you do understand. There are Communists inciting the people there, and Anarchists, and Irishmen, and Catholics, all talking openly against the State."

"Not all on the same side, surely?"

Candidus disregarded me. "More-over the police are making no attempt

to intervene. They have doubtless gone over to the rebels."

"And the rabble is thoroughly roused?" I smiled.

"No. That is what I find so disturbing. The speakers insult and abuse them in the most violent terms and they make no protest. It is when crowds become thus apathetic that they become an easy prey to agitators. They even smile at some of these revolutionary speeches."

"You mistake, I think, the British character."

"Maybe it is you who are mistaken. In my opinion a revolutionary plot is being hatched. There will be a coup d'état on November the

Fifth, when your Queen opens Parliament. Even the children in the streets are collecting money for ammunition. It



is a most unfortunate date to have chosen for the ceremony—the anniversary of another such plot, hence calculated to appeal greatly to the imagination of the people.”

“That time it was not very successful.”

“I have the gravest fears that this time it will be. A section of the crowd was on its knees, praying. I can only hope its prayers will be answered.”

It was with some difficulty that I was able to persuade Candidus to come to the opening of Parliament. His curiosity, however, finally proved stronger than his fears. He put on a hired morning-coat, and concealed a revolver, strapped into its holster, on his hip beneath it.”

“You are wearing your bullet-proof waistcoat?” I asked ironically.

“Of course,” he replied solemnly, opening his jacket to show me.

“You should perhaps wear a tin top-hat.”

“You choose to be frivolous,” he scolded. “By the end of the day you may have cause to regret this attitude.”

Driving down Constitution Hill we were held up by a squadron of Household Cavalry, gaily beplumed, their cuirasses shining in the sunlight.

“Horsemen!” exclaimed Candidus scornfully. “Is that all the Queen has to protect her?”

“There are, you will observe, foot Guards as well, in front of the Palace. Welsh ones.”

“Armed with tin-hats and machine-guns? No. Fur hats and muskets. And the Welsh are known to be disaffected. Where are your guns, your tanks? The Queen herself, I assume, will be travelling to Westminster in an armoured vehicle?”

Candidus was slightly mollified by the spectacle of a pair of gun carriages, which I was quick to point out to him, trundling down the Mall. Then, however, he was alarmed by the sound of a few sporadic explosions in St. James's Park, and still more so by the salute of forty-one guns which followed. The bombardment, he exclaimed, with a tense, set expression, had begun. When we reached the Houses of Parliament, guarded by a handful of police, he said “It is just as I feared. The police are divided.”

As one of them ushered him in through the door of the House of Lords I tried to reassure him. The vaults, I

told him, had been thoroughly searched that morning by the Yeomen of the Guard—with lanterns. There could be no danger of a Gunpowder Plot.

“Gunpowder!” he protested contemptuously. “Nowadays, you know, there are other, deadlier explosives. I should be much easier in my mind if I knew what some of these peers are concealing under these robes of theirs. I notice that nobody searches them as they enter. Of what use, I should like to know, are gold sticks and maces and swords of State against hand-grenades? I observe too that the Russian Ambassador is present, together with a number of his puppets. Doubtless they all have radioactive wrist-watches.”

I was able nevertheless to distract Candidus's attention towards the pageantry around him.

“This is the House of Ladies?” he inquired.

“Not yet. Of Lords.”

“But there are very many ladies in it, all wearing diamond crowns.”

“They are the wives of the lords.”

“They appear to dominate those lords, seated beneath them.”

“Not in reality.”

“I had been given to understand that lords and ladies wore tweeds.”

“Not in here.”

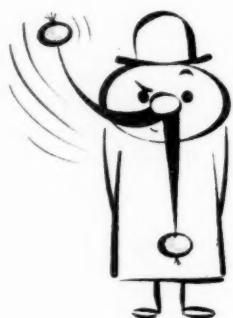
“The lords, it seems to me, are somewhat casual in their demeanour. They are lounging about on those divans, and chattering and laughing.”

“They feel at home here. They like to be comfortable.”

“It is otherwise a fine spectacle. It is produced by a television director?”

“Certainly not. It is not produced by anybody.”

“That seems a trifle careless. In my country it would be.”



RAY DAVIS

“Here that is not considered necessary.”

“Where then are the television cameras?”

“They are not considered necessary either.”

Candidus grew restless, with a renewal of apprehension, as the moment approached for the Queen's arrival. He kept looking nervously over his shoulder and around him, in all directions. Then his attention was fixed by her. He rose with the rest as she walked slowly to the Throne, then started with alarm as he heard a confused murmur of voices, and a stampeding of feet outside, and saw a crowding of wigged and black-clad figures towards the Bar.

“The rabble is coming,” he cried startled. “Led by the judiciary.”

“No. Only the Commons.”

Momentarily relieved, he listened attentively to the Queen's Speech, disturbed that the producer appeared to have forgotten the microphone, astonished that he could hear well enough without it, shocked at the mundane matters which crossed the Royal lips—the value of money, the improvement of agricultural drainage in Scotland, the rating system, grants to local authorities, the reconstruction of a harbour in Wales—once again startled by the haste with which the Speaker of the Commons left the Chamber at the end, and himself involuntarily making with undue haste towards the exit.

Safe before the door of the House he seemed reassured—though momentarily agitated by the announcement of a waggish peer, “The Russian Ambassador's satellite is at the door.”

Nevertheless, listening, he conceded: “The bombardment appears to be over. Possibly the plot has miscarried after all.”

But after dinner that night he chanced to stroll to the window and started back into the room with dismay.

“London is burning,” he cried. “There are fires and explosions everywhere. You can hear the cries. The sky is red with revolution.”

“Mrs. Hicks, in an elegant model gown, helped to entertain the guests, including comedian MAX BYGRAVES, in a blue-and-white marquee with a built-in dance floor on the lawn.”—*Evening Standard*

Get any laughs?



"Whichever way you look at it, Britain's no longer an island."

Send-off

By CLAUD COCKBURN

"OH, I say Jones, wanted have a word with you. Actually about Venus, more or less."

"Love that makes the world go round, sir."

"Quite. I mean to say have a cigar. Want you to feel, Jones, when you come into the Governor's office in this prison, well I mean, Jones, just because you're on a life stretch for that little matter, don't have to stand at attention and all that. What's spit and polish, Jones, compared to winning? I said it to Alanbrooke once and I'd say it again. You remember well as I do what Wellington called those British soldiers in the Peninsular War who saved the country? 'Scum of the earth.'"

"Didn't come here to be insulted, sir. There are regulations to deal with that type of outburst on the part of Prison Authorities. I've got M.P.s just like you have, sir."

"Just a quotation, Jones. Historical. Thought it pertinent for a moment. No offence, no offence."

"None taken where none intended, Governor. What seems to be on your mind?"

"As I said, it's about, as it were, Venus."

"Often wondered what they did with those arms. Archaeology seems laggard with a satisfying answer, sir."

"Not de Milo, old man. Planet. One, if I may say so, of our neighbour planets that we all want to get to know better."

"Green heads and death rays. Annihilate you."

"Ha-ha! Well you know, old lag, a lot of that's propaganda. Fact is, we were wondering—just me and a few of the fellows in Downing Street—how you'd care to pop out of here and have a look at those chaps. See how they're getting on—facing their problems, the spatial dilemma, production, all that sort of thing. Might be a lesson for all of us."

"Well, cheery-bye for now, sir. Been nice chatting with you."

"Just a minute, Jones. *Some* people have actually volunteered to make the trip—for Britain's sake. Man beats dog to planet. But you know what volunteers are, Jones. It's heroism and uncharted seas one minute and 'call me a neo-Elizabethan,' and next thing you know they're arguing about insurance in case, well in case of anything happening. Whereas a man in your position."

"Should be a dog's life, sir, if you ask me. Case for dumb friends."

"This isn't Russia, Jones."

"I've seen dogs that's delinquent just like me. So far's their limited intellectual and imaginative capacities permit, sir."

"Well, all I can say is, none of them is prepared to go. Bark like homicidal rapists and howl for their M.P.s just at the mere suggestion."

"Didn't come here to be insulted, sir."

"Sorry, Jones. No offence. Inadvertent thought-association. Well, what about it?"

"Pardon granted soon as asked, sir."

"*Mot juste*, I'd call that, Jones. *Mot* 'pardon,' I mean. It's what it'll mean for you. Unconditional. We'll parachute you down into the middle of Empire Day. Make Khrushchev look like a barrel of monkeys."

"Now there's an idea, sir. Monkeys."

"All on call for atom tests in South Pacific. If Britain's to hold her place

in this modern Space of ours we're going to have to recognize that there's nothing left but manpower."

"Well, sir, if you put it like that. Any climate on Venus, sir, if I may ask?"

"I was just coming to that. You'll find it very home-like, so they tell me. Dense cloud all over the place most of the time. It says here 'The atmosphere is so permeated with fine particles of vapour up to its outer limit as to be only translucent without being transparent.' View of expert astronomer H. N. Russell."

"Smog, sir?"

"Smog all the way is what we hear. Permanent test to physique and character such as produced Britons such as we are to-day. Anyone can live on Mars. Venus is something different again. Needs something."

"Stamina, sir. Just one thing, sir. About the return trip. I'm essentially a home-body."

"Don't worry your head about that Jones. They're looking into that. Arrangements are being made. Something'll be laid on."

"Oh, jolly good, sir. Well then, it's me for the Spacious Life."

"Just one word about that, Jones."

"Shouldn't wonder if I didn't have quite a spree up there, sir."

"That's what I mean, Jones. As you know, we here on earth know one another's little ways."

"Human, all too human, what?"

"Exactly. But you've got to remember that up there on Venus you're really what I might call an ambassador—representative of all that is best in our national character."

"You mean act with restraint? Study the manners and customs of the natives?"

"I don't mean to say you've got to lead a drab life there, Jones. But—just glancing through your record—h'm, h'm . . . well, just until you know what their attitude is to, well, to you know the kind of thing I mean, I'd go a little slow, Jones."

"Be a model of deportment, sir. All the same, nature's the same the whole space over, isn't it, sir?"

"I hope so, Jones. And jolly good luck to you."



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Continuing—

I LIKE IT HERE

by Kingsley Amis

THESE are some ships of the sardine fleet," Afilhado said, "restoring their nets after their voyage. Many sardines are eaten by the people here. In the north and central districts it is cod; here in the south it is sardines." His kindly serious face looked rather anxiously round the harbour, weighing up, it seemed, whether to risk overwhelming Bowen with information or to court the danger of leaving him in perplexity on some point. Then he smiled. "Here is something interesting. These fishermen are singing a sea-shanty as they lay out this large net and then place it in folds. By singing in this way they are able to regulate their movements. I think this must be rare now in England, Mr. Bowen."

Sitting in the little sailing-boat

between his sons, Bowen felt impressed and found no reason for not being. The notion that this sort of thing could take place without an invisible accompanying orchestra, without Spencer Tracy and Henry Fonda hanging about or joining in, was a pleasant one, even though very little could be done with that notion once it had presented itself. And if the same thing applied to the authentic toothless boatman who saw to the technicalities of their craft, the Moorish-looking fort that commanded the entrance to the harbour, the undeniably colourful fish-market at the landward end, then it was still worth coming some distance to find that these things were so and not otherwise.

Afilhado was conferring with the boatman about something. Bowen could not help calling him Afilhado,

even though he had worked out that this was not the chap's name but merely the perfect participle passive of the Portuguese verb cognate with "affiliate," and could thus only be used with propriety by the Bannions, who had adopted him. They had more or less adopted the five Bowens too, come to that, having extricated them from Oates's establishment and installed them rent-free in a chalet they owned in the mountains that overlooked the coastal plain. To-day Harry Bannion had summoned them for lunch, preceding this by the boating party for the male Bowens and a shopping expedition for Barbara under Isabella's guidance. Sandra Bowen was being stuffed and cosseted by the Bannions' maids. Some drinks had already been had that morning; more were promised before

the meal and more still would beyond question be had during and after it. It was going to be a nice full day.

"You notice this ship here, Mr. Bowen," Afilhado's mild voice was saying. "You notice perhaps it is built in a different fashion from the others. It is higher above the water."

"Oh, that blue one? Yes, it is different, isn't it?"

"You notice that it has 'Suomi' painted on its side."

"So it has."

"'Suomi' means 'Finland.'"

"Oh, yes?"

"It is 'Finland' in the Finnish language."

"That's interesting."

"It is curious how that ship comes to be here."

"Yes." Bowen made a great business of taking out his packet of 20-20-20 miniature cigars: nearly as nice as his

Dutch favourites and 8d. for twenty. Afilhado waited politely until he had lit one, then continued:

"Since a year the crew of this ship murdered their captain. The ship was sailing from a port in Morocco. The crew joined together in a conspiracy and carried out this murder. Then they sailed the ship here and surrendered themselves to the authorities, confessing what they had done. They were taken from here to Lisbon so that it was decided what must become of them. The ship remained here and they were taken back to Finland by land. There they experienced a trial for the murder. I cannot say what happened to them."

"Were they hung?" David and Mark seemed to ask at once.

"I cannot say. I suppose they were imprisoned. But as you see, Mr. Bowen, the ship remains here even now. The captain's father received the ship by

the will of the captain. He made the journey here from Finland, because he wished to sell the ship and here there was nobody who might sell the ship for him. In Finland, you know, the ship would be worth much money. But here it is of no use. It is of the wrong shape for the fishing of sardines and so the captain's father cannot sell it. He did not know of this when he came. And he has no money with which to pay the men who should sail it back to Finland for him, and he has no money with which to make his own journey back to Finland. So he remains here, and he has made of the ship his home. He does this for almost a year."

Bowen said: "Why did the crew murder the captain?"

"I cannot say. But it seems that he was a very bad captain. Look, Mr. Bowen. You can see the captain's father now."

A fat pig-faced man with thin white hair was walking along the deck of *Suomi*, which they were now passing at a distance of a few yards. He wore a white singlet and shapeless blue trousers but he reminded Bowen of Mr. Binns, the prosperous grocer he saw in the pub at home. The captain's father began gathering over his arm some underclothes which had been hung over a stay to dry. Then the sail of their own boat hid him from view.

"What does he do for a living?"

Bowen asked.

"At first he was employed on one of the sardine ships. But he could not learn how to perform that job. And so he is now employed in the fish-market."

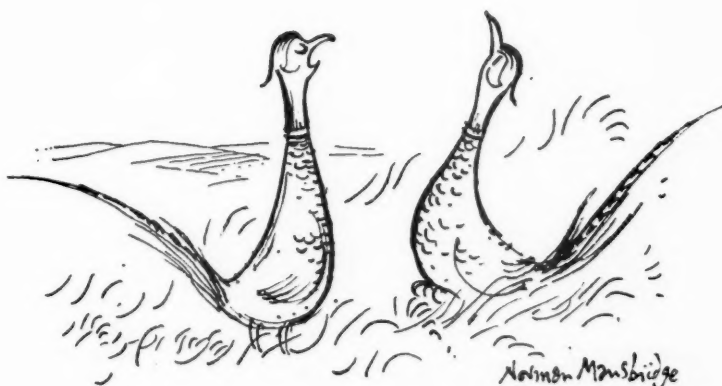
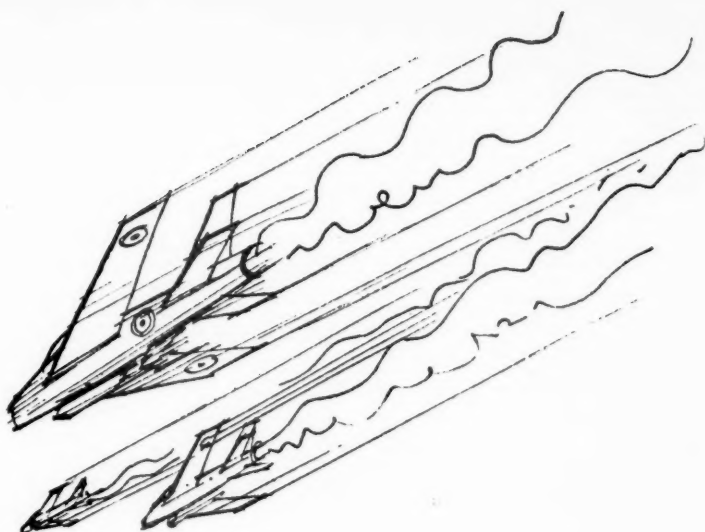
A powerful, useless thrill ran through Bowen. Here was a marvellous story for someone, but not, unfortunately, for him. Only a rather worse or much older writer than himself could tackle it satisfactorily. W. Somerset Maugham (on grounds of age, not lack of merit) was the kind of chap. "I have a notion that men are seldom what they seem." Or "Lars Ericssen"—something like that, anyway—"was the skipper of a small Finnish cargo vessel. He was a big bronzed man who never looked you directly in the eye. One hot summer off Tangier..." Mm. A rather worse or much older writer. Well, just say a writer, instead of a man who was supposed to be a writer. That would get it.

They landed soon after that and



Bowen stopped half-way up the beach to get the sand off his feet and put on his socks and shoes. Afilhado stepped without fuss into a pair of wet plimsolls, which somehow yielded a plausible harmony with his military-style jacket and clerical collar.

Bowen laughed a great deal. He watched while Afilhado, who felt perhaps that the grown-ups had had things their own way for too long, cracked a successful joke with the boys, using that special sedate affectionateness that priests and nuns always seemed to go in for. It was a pity that the depth and duration of his acquaintance with Afilhado were necessarily so limited. He had felt rather the same way about de Sousa and Bachixa, now evermore sundered from him, and even—a far more arresting achievement—about Carlos Joaquim Cordeiro Oates. Things had had to pile up a good deal to bring Bowen to the point of announcing to that man that their association must terminate: a forty-eight-hour boycott by Barbara, a further slackening of domestic routine, an intimation from Marchant that Oates was charging half as much again as the Pensão Internacional, a qualitative change for the worse in the Oates lavatory, the Bannions' offer of their chalet. Even these might not have sufficed without the sight of Oates riding in after work with a brand-new windshield fixed to his ginger-coloured motor-bike. Filling in time by working out how many bottles of disinfectant that windshield was worth, Bowen had waited for Oates to change his suit jacket for his pyjama jacket—a habit of his on hot evenings—because he could hate him more thus attired. Then he had given notice. After a lot of blinking and creaking and file-consulting and references to the by now legendary Seixas Peres (Olivia's in-laws' Lisbon pal), Oates had said he would need to be paid for two weeks instead of one if his accounts were to balance. Bowen had seen no reason why they should do that at his expense—but still, it had been worth it to say goodbye to that stinking insect-vivarium Oates called a house. And so off they had gone, the senior Bowens again on speaking terms, the boys asking for a translation of the Lone Ranger in Portuguese, Sandra clutching the dolls which, in a rather pathetic pretence that cordiality was unimpaired, had been



"Oh, those things—they're harmless."

pressed upon her by Rosie and mother-in-law—no swooner or psychotic she, it had transpired, but the sturdiest and most amenable member of the household.

Resigning himself, perforce, to never knowing what made Oates tick or how he got his shaving-water from the geyser to the wash-basin, Bowen mounted the little hill at Afilhado's side. He admitted to himself now that he had felt rather uneasy in the sailing-boat. Suppose he had been and gone and fallen into the water all of a sudden? A fine thing that would have been. He had thought in the past that a binary system of laziness and conceit accounted fully for all the motions of his life, but

of late its orbit had shown perturbations from a third component. This additional body seemed to be fear, and abroad, of course, was what took him to perihelion. It had done it before, in 1944-5, without having to put him in a moment's real danger. He hoped hard that nothing nasty was going to happen on this trip. Well, the recession of the Buckmaster imbroglio—they had come south without the chance of seeing him again—was some sort of reassurance there. Good stuff.

They reached the terrace of the Bannions' house, which overlooked the harbour. Here, under a capacious umbrella, drinks were drunk and olives stuffed with anchovies eaten. Lunch

was all Bowen had foreseen, and more. There was soup, shellfish stew, roast pork, chicken, plum pudding, fruit, cheese, cakes, sweets, chocolates, coffee, red wine, white wine, port, brandy, madeira, cigars. About four o'clock Bowen, breathing shallowly, got himself into the Morris. He thanked everybody a lot and would have liked to go on doing so for much longer. This kind of thing, at any rate, was nowhere to be found in Llansamlet, near Swansea, Glam.

Barbara's shopping trip had been a success. She had bought food for the family as a whole, clothing and footwear for herself and the children, drink (including Lisbon gin at 11s. the large bottle) for her husband. There was change from the money she had been given, too: not much, but some. Isabella Bannion had contrived to slip in presents for each of the five. On the drive back to the mountains Bowen relapsed into a torpor. It was some protection against noticing too continuously how the day's satisfactions had imparted vivacity and fire to Barbara's driving, against picturing too distinctly how they would look with the bonnet in accordion-pleats, being towed God knew where by one of the local bullock-carts. He had familiarized himself with the bullock-cart image during the southern part of their long drive down from Lisbon the previous week; during the northern part it had necessarily been a mule-cart image. The general idea, however, was the same.

Arriving at the chalet without mishap, Barbara dropped Bowen there while she went on into the village to pick up the

mail. It was now his task to pump up water from the well into the tank to provide for the making of tea, the preparation of baths, etc. He liked this job: it made him feel all son-of-the-soil without much exertion. During it he talked cheerfully to the hobbled piglet the Bannions had given them, trying to forget that it was destined to become roast pork in a few weeks. Afterwards he greeted the mangy stray cat and emaciated stray dog adopted by Barbara on her arrival, then went to see if the toad was still in his crevice under the garden wall. He was, looking in excellent trim, but as usual trying to pretend he wasn't there. Bowen went into the house, where others of God's creatures were buzzing phrenetically about. He got going with the fly-squirter; it was wonderful having one of his own after the meagre goes with Oates's instrument he had been allowed. He gave his and Barbara's bedroom special attention.

He went into the sitting-room, where his work-table was. Here were grounds, he thought, for some complacency and self-congratulation. The article for *See* magazine and two others lay there in draft- or substantial note-form; a 1,200-word review of a work on the Bloomsbury group, sent to him at Oates's, awaited only its covering letter, *Teach Him a Lesson* had got on to page 35; a couple of sheets of jottings about Buckmaster/Strether were ready in case. Oh, not bad at all. And beyond the typewriter stood a more reliable aid to well-being: a full bottle of *medronha* with a kind of tree inside it. A local liqueur resembling *calvados*, but made

from an arboreal strawberry-like fruit, it was an excellent nightcap, especially after a few glasses of *vinho tinto* and a port or two and a brandy or two.

Barbara arrived with the post. She said: "Nothing from Mummy. I hope she's all right."

"Of course she is. You'll hear to-morrow. She'll only just have got your letter telling her the new address."

"I wish I'd sent it to her sooner."

"You couldn't have done. You wrote the moment you knew."

"Perhaps she's sent one to Oates's place."

"Well, if she has he'll forward it."

She did her vigorous head-shake, inhaling and shutting her eyes. "I wouldn't be too sure of that."

"Oh, nonsense, he wouldn't do anything he thought was nasty."

"What about that extra cash he took off us?"

"He didn't think that was nasty. He thought he was entitled to that."

"But it was nasty, whatever he thought about it."

"That doesn't make any difference; he didn't think it was nasty."

"I think it makes all the difference," she said stoutly.

"Well yes, in general it does, but we're talking about Oates doing or not doing things he thinks are nasty."

"I can't see why that should be special."

"It isn't special, dear. All I'm saying is that if he thinks a thing's nasty he doesn't do it, probably."

"But surely the important thing is that he does do nasty things when he doesn't think they're nasty."

"I was only trying to establish..."

"Sandra, leave those things alone in there." She sped out of the room.

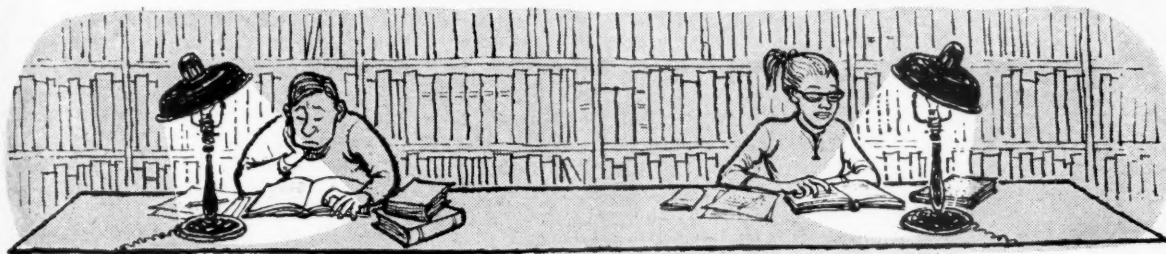
Bowen sighed, then grinned, then stopped grinning. Here was a letter addressed in Oates's neat writing. A demand for more money? Ha ha. Ha ha. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

He ripped it open to find what must be a cable inside. Oates had written on it in pencil: *Sorry this is delayed but I was away shooting at the week-end and Rosie didn't know your address. Do hope everything turns out alright. Kindest regards—C.J.C.O.* The sender of the cable was Mrs. Knowles's next-door neighbour and the text ran: PLEASE RETURN IMMEDIATELY MOTHER VERY ILL.

(To be continued next week)



B. Wiseman



Scersh

By ALEX ATKINSON

(With all due respect to Commander Ian Fleming)

JAMES BUND took another Morton and Patianik cheroot from the seasoned marlwood box on F.'s desk and lit it with a brown-tipped match manufactured by Jno. Wetherhead and Sons Ltd., 27 Dunstable Road, Woolwich. Before the match went out, almost without thinking, he pressed the lighted end into the flesh of his taut upper cabyltax, just below the tertiary princeps artery.

No pain. His health continued good, which was a blessing.

F. regarded him kindly. "There you have it then, James, in a nutshell. You will see, of course, why you were specially chosen for this mission?"

"Because I'm the only secret agent in the whole of MC6Q officially authorized to gouge people's eyes out with a blunt stick."

"On Thursdays. Precisely."

040109, to give Bund his full title, shot the cuffs of a grey Poitiers-silk Mytchley-pattern shirt, tailored by Hargreaves and Partington of South Audley Street at eight guineas with two extra collars, and leaned across the desk. Of all the men he loved (and there were many) F. held the firmest place in his affections. If ever the time came for him to lay down his life, tortured to the last bestial extremity, with fleshy Cossack barmaids jumping on his battered body wearing only spiked boots and four-and-elevenpenny hats, he hoped it would be for F.'s sake. But for the moment vague doubts nagged and jostled deep inside him.

"You have a question?" F. raised one eyebrow. Then he leaned back and looked out over Bund's head at the dusty plane trees fringing the park. The daffodil yellow telephone, a direct

line connecting the P.M., F., Lord B——, the Minister of Unofficial Torture and the Hep Club off Mount Street, buzzed intermittently. Through the secret peephole in the base of F.'s solid yxica inkwell Bund watched a lewd cocktail party in the Mauve Room at the Soviet Embassy, much reduced in size. Serov was there, he noticed, in a made-up tie. That could mean only one thing . . .

"Yes. I have a question. Quite frankly, F., I can't understand why you place such emphasis on the inadvisability of smashing SCERSH utterly. The way I see it——"

F. stopped him with a gesture. He took a chinchilla-flavoured Howard's Impeccable After-Dinner Fondant (*By Appointment*) from a zither-shaped oak dish, and pressed it with flexible fingers into the bowl of his Anschluss Und

Friergarten meerscham. Bund passed him a lighted match. He had a whole boxful.

"James, I'm going to tell you something." F. pressed a switch cunningly let in to his wrist, and the room instantly became intravortically soundproof, giving off an eerie amber light scented with gravbla. "We, James, are on the same side as SCERSH!"

Bund felt the pallicules rising on his vertichode. His hands became so clammy that the deadly capsule of mithodulate sulphode strapped to his left index finger melted, and dripped on to the leg of his Chicago-style Hakkermacher lounging Slax in gut red with a diagonal dried-blood fleck. He couldn't believe his ears! Quickly he checked the wavelength on the miniature audioscope glued to his belly-button. N.N.E., ampature 3·03, signal PBP recurring: nothing wrong there. He looked again at F. Perhaps he was dreaming? Had there been anything funny about the Edwards and Richter's pre-emulsiated Tinned Mackerel-Melba in thick anchovy ketchup he had eaten for supper? What about his rather rushed *petit déjeuner* of Yugoslav stewed bread-and-butter pudding with fresh Suffolk kidneys? . . .

"The letters SCERSH," F. was saying, "actually stand for the School of Cruelty and Eroticism Relished at Second Hand. I don't suppose they told you that during your Higher Echelon course in advanced espionage and leg-breaking? True, nevertheless. It follows, therefore, that if we smash SCERSH we're out of a job. We can never do more than *pretend* to try to put an end to it. Its continued existence fills an urgent contemporary need, you



see. Cast your mind back to the school of Leslie Charteris and all his cronies. Childish, you think? Exactly. Because they were geared to cater for a public so wide that it included schoolgirls, backward bank-clerks, and rural deans. We, on the other hand, have dragged in an entirely *new* set of suckers—the people who have dry martinis before dinner and rush to see banned plays because sex has taken the place of canasta in *chic* chat. They are vicious people, James, because this is the day of viciousness. According to my top-secret coded information, our civilization (better not mention this, by the way) is due to disappear any day now in an orgy of sex and atom bombs, against a background of emasculated pop-singers wailing about their Maker in four-four time. So, until that great day arrives, these people are lolloping about in their Espresso-bar flats trying to kill time by working off some of their self-destructive evil. They, in fact, *are* SCERSH." F. paused, and aiming his automatic T47 death-ray (still on the secret list) at a nude female Caucasian agent as she crouched on the window-sill with a

sophisticated Boys' Magazine blow-pipe slung around one breast, lazily pressed the trigger. A faint smell of burning leather seeped through the window.

"So you see," F. went on, "we can be as childish as we like so long as we wrap it up in polite Kensington smut and ever-so-thrilling new-Chelsea barbarism. And we must never *quite* smash SCERSH."

"Message received," Bund said quietly. "That explains a lot. I see now why, in order to intercept a message from a Greek spy in Venezuela, I must first watch a mad Bulgarian giant ravish a chloroformed fan-dancer in San Remo."

"And squeeze the windpipe of a one-legged leper in Las Palmas until his cervicate mandrel spurts out on to his occipume."

"Yes. And shoot Pfrutz, the blind baby-farmer, through one knee-cap, making some wryly humorous remark as I turn back to where I left off with Natasha."

"Exactly. And remember to keep yourself naked as much as possible. Well, are you ready?"

"Yes." Bund flexed his secondary ambivore muscle, and patted the box of stink-bombs in his hip-pocket.

"You have the three-inch bazooka taped to your instep? And the poisoned lip-salve? The blunt stick for eyes? The decoy-woman in your overnight bag, drowsy with aphrodisiacs? Plenty of '214 ammo for the sawn-off Bleck-Kramer self-loading single-bore hammerless pearl-handled Mark II four-ounce repeater with gypsum ramrod and nickel-ended two-way laminator?"

"Yes."

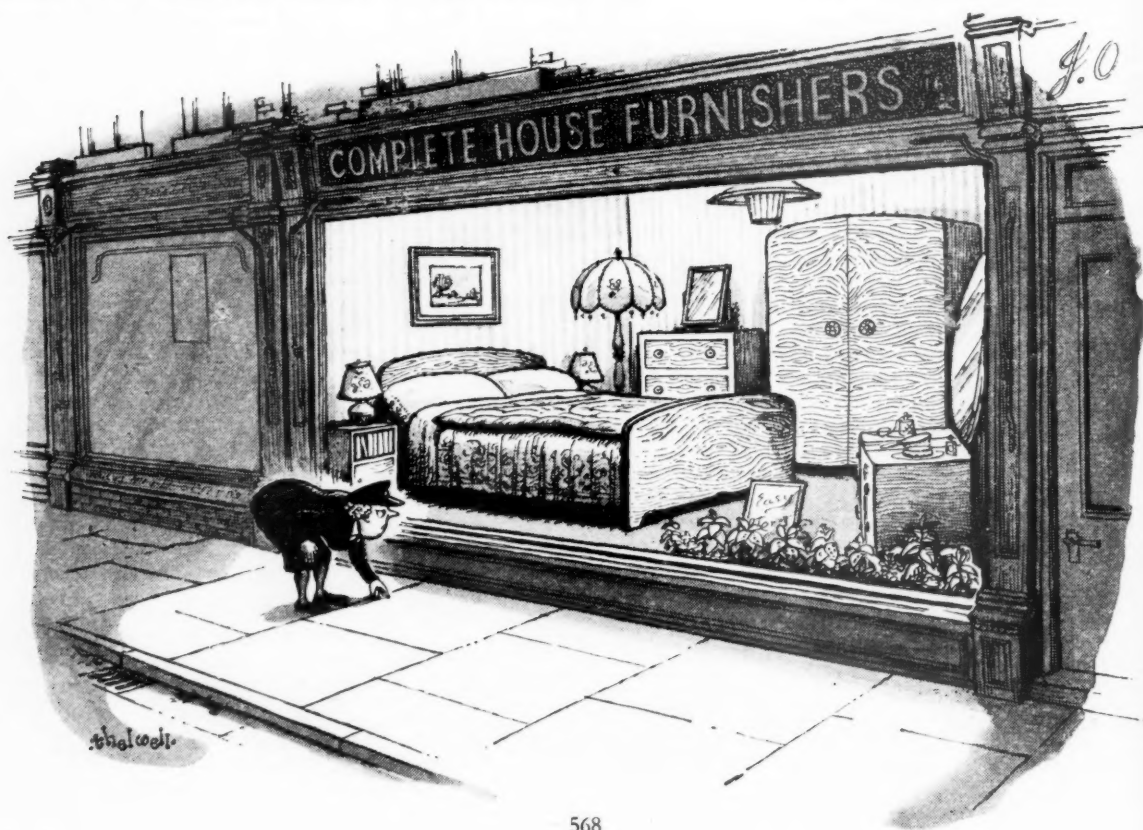
"Then off you go, James." F. rose. "My love goes with you. And the love of all those poor, maladjusted females and would-be Bunds. Off you go and enjoy ourselves—and may God help us all."

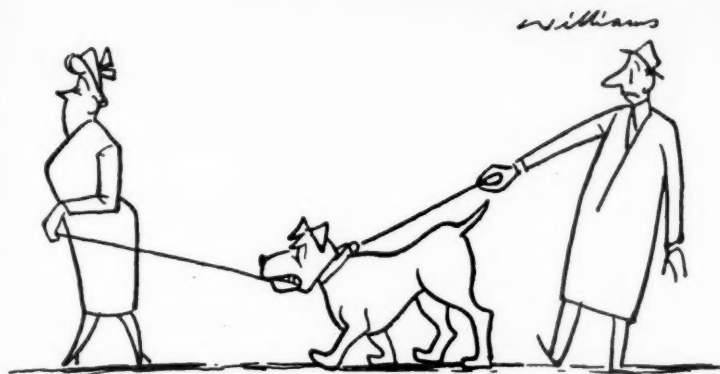
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"*The River's Edge (BB). Melodrama on the Mexican border, mainly concerning a wayward lass with two strings to her bow, one of which is a ruthless killer. Impressive exteriors and good red meat."

Greenock Telegraph

Try Salvador Dali.





Maclaren-Ross's Mystery Magazines

ALTHOUGH, of course, both G. K. and John o' London had at one time their respective weeklies, neither Raffles nor Dr. Fu-Manchu ever occupied an editorial chair. But as transatlantic movie-stars tend more and more nowadays to direct and produce films featuring themselves, so fictional characters have begun increasingly to become editors of magazines bearing their own names. This trend, also of American origin, is at present restricted to various Mystery Magazines, whose eponymous editors are either detectives or criminals operating in the U.S.A.

Pioneer in the field was Ellery Queen who, as his many admirers know, is not only a detective but the chronicler of his own cases. It was Mr. Queen who set the prevailing pattern: the title-page facsimile signature; the semi-humorous comment on the stories included in each issue; the price (35 c. in the States, 1s. 6d. for the English edition); and the consistently high standard of authorship (he printed, for instance, the story version of Graham Greene's *Third Man* complete in one number). The American edition, slightly larger and thicker than that sold in this country, has a pictorial coloured cover often depicting incidents—such as a gorilla strangling a girl through the bars of its cage—which have no place in the actual contents; but the British cover has become steadily more decorous, graduating finally from an attractive border design of lethal weapons, spades, skulls, scales of justice, hypodermic

needles, and coffins to the severely plain white-and-gold of the October issue.

Mr. Queen's example was soon followed from the other side of the fence by the Saint, a chivalrous expatriate English crook and literary descendant of Arsène Lupin and Edgar Wallace's Four Just Men, who solves mysteries on the side and metes out retribution to criminals whom the law cannot touch. But Simon Templar, the Saint, does not himself edit the detective magazine which is named after him: instead it is the pleasantly pugnacious, Burt Lancastrian face of his creator, Leslie Charteris, which is pictured on the reverse of the cover. (Ellery Queen, presumably, was debarred from photographic representation by the fact that he was initially the product of *two* men, working in collaboration.)

Mr. Charteris, too, has published Graham Greene and maintains a high literary standard: his table of contents is "multiple-starred with the names of

such greats" as William Faulkner, P. G. Wodehouse, G. K. Chesterton, H. G. Wells, Damon Runyon and Ray Bradbury among others. Each issue contains a long, complete adventure of the Saint in addition to material by other writers, and the editor is not inhibited by modesty in referring to these examples of his own work ("I liked it very much when I originally wrote it—I like it just as much now"); he is elsewhere described as "the incomparable Leslie Charteris," and an advertisement declares that "there's no more widely known and beloved character in present-day mystery fiction than our own Simon Templar."

His editorial approach is forthright and even slightly truculent: "When I consider (as I seldom do)," he writes, "the flatulent judgment of the egg-heads who affect to look down their long noses at the type of fiction which this magazine is dedicated to merchandising I am usually tempted to retort that the main difference between the so-called 'better' literature and ours is that the former takes a normal and believable situation and problem and wrings it out to a remorselessly dull and predictable conclusion, whereas our writers would never sell us a line if they couldn't start with the same material and rapidly lead through a few novel and original twists to something fairly electrifyingly unexpected."

The Saint has recently developed a companion monthly named *Mike Shayne's Mystery Magazine* (after an Irish-American Private Eye called that); an advertisement depicts the two magazines running along, rather endearingly, hand-in-hand, but though the photograph of Mike's creator, Mr. Brett Halliday, shows him wearing a black eye-shade of agreeably piratical aspect, the contents-value has not, thus far,



People for Presents

The Uncle. Odd, to think that he used to fight your father, or (as the case may be) put worms in your mother's pencil-case. Your recollections date only from tingling half-crowns tucked in a handshake, and a periodic box of Household Cavalry. To repay him in money and soldiers would seem patronizing. But PUNCH makes you all boys together, shrinks the age-gap, shows that your appreciation of past favours, for so long a muffled stammer, has found pure expression at last. Full subscription details are on page 586.



come up to scratch: a long Mike Shayne "novelet," however, is provided every time to satisfy the numerous fans of this "tall, compact, sardonic crusader, who is as ready to kick a killer in the stomach as he is to help an old lady across the street."

Patriotism notwithstanding it must also be stated that the single example of the trend to originate, so far, from this country does not bear comparison with either of the two American pioneers. This is *The John Creasey Mystery Magazine* whose executive editor (creator of a gentleman-adventurer called The Toff) has an annual output—estimated in words alone—said to put Edgar Wallace in the shade. It includes accounts of factual crimes, costs sixpence more than its transatlantic rivals, and consists mainly of reprints (an excellent historical story entitled *The Black Cabinet*, by John Dickson Carr, published in *The Saint* for April 1957, appeared again in the May issue of Mr. Creasey's monthly). In the same number, however, Mr. Creasey scored by including Charles Dickens as a

contributor and reviewing two of his own novels in a section headed "John Creasey Looks at Some New Books."

In the U.S.A. the latest editorial recruit is neither detective, criminal, nor fictional character but Mr. Alfred Hitchcock, the film-director. *His Mystery Magazine* ("New stories presented by the master of Suspense"), now on sale in England, price two shillings, is larger in format than its competitors and more sophisticated in general make-up. The photo-montage cover (by Bsacca/Idea House) shows Mr. Hitchcock's head super-imposed on a tailor's dummy clad in a mauve-and-white-striped suit, in the act of drawing a gun from an inner pocket. This surrealistic figure, standing on a chessboard floor, is in turn menaced from behind by a revolver held in the hand of a uniformed but faceless cop; while, seen through a panel slid back in the wall, bathers are sporting on a beach below.

As in the TV programme, "Alfred Hitchcock Presents," Mr. Hitchcock's shadow and silhouette are used as trademarks throughout. In the September

issue he writes an amusing, chatty editorial, all about the death of his dog ("Myer of Bristol, n'c Phillips of Magnesia") and a correspondent who wished him to commit the perfect murder; his attitude to the reader is unaffected and even matey ("now that you have finished reading Alfred Hitchcock's *Mystery Magazine*, how did you like it? I should also be very pleased to receive your reactions . . ."); while his personal taste is strongly reflected both in the stories and his ironically macabre comments upon them. We take leave of him presenting us "with a most extraordinary subscription offer" (a \$5.25 value for only \$4.00), and his photograph spreads its hands in resignation: "Well, now, it's altogether up to you."

There the trend rests, at present. But suppose it spreads to Great Britain? And beyond the *Mystery Magazine*, to other spheres of literary activity? Just imagine what this might result in. *John Osborne's Angry Young Man Mag.* or even *Lucky Jim's* . . . But enough.

J. MACLAREN-ROSS

Boys and Girls Stay in to Read

By R. G. G. PRICE

MY contemporaries often worry because they feel it is difficult to make contact with the young. They find them polite enough, far more polite than we were when taking off into life, but uninterested. First-hand accounts of historical events that they would otherwise have to learn about from books make them peep at their watches. Stout assertions of the orthodoxies of the thirties do not sting them into hot rebuttal. The middle-aged do not drive them into revolt, as they did us. They just make them hide their yawns.

Personally I am content to leave the young to enjoy the companionship of their own age groups. The shift in the balance of population means that it is getting less and less essential for the forward-looking to cultivate this shrinking market. What matters increasingly is what the old are thinking about things. It is a cheering thought that tastes do not alter fundamentally after about twenty-five. Every improvement in antibiotics makes it more certain that somewhere up in the eighties there is an assured market for costume romance or even for side-splitting novels about the trials and tribulations of early motorists. And, with luck, the tastes of the thirties will stay active and profitable even longer.

This rather haughty attitude is not, of course, possible to large and expanding organizations, for whom the young must be harvested like the rest of the public. They are customers and the more that can be found out about them the better. W. H. Smith and George Harrap, a bookseller-and-newsagent hand in hand, for once, with a publisher, have been surveying the reading habits of boys and girls and have wisely allowed their gaze to potter round the fringes of the subject as well as pierce to its centre. The feeling that the findings gave me was that anthropology had got loose in our midst. I cannot find any point of contact with boys who give their hobby as "saving footballers" or their career ambition as "solicitor and part-time musician" or "chef or shipwright," though I can understand the boy who said his favourite newspaper was "Yorks Post at school, but Reville at home."

The Survey scatters its facts prodigally. 1.5 per cent of girls at secondary modern schools want to be air hostesses; boys in public and grammar schools put *Eagle* first in their list, not surprisingly perhaps, as it is often the only "comic" allowed in schools. At the genial press conference where the surveyors presented their findings to the great world, they seemed a little saddened that the crude newshawks wanted to know even more. Were the questionnaires filled up in school or at home? Did the existence of class libraries and reading periods have any relation to the fact that Dickens came third in popularity for both boys and girls in secondary modern schools? When 80.8 per cent of girls in secondary

modern schools claimed to visit bookshops and 58.5 per cent claimed to buy books were they, in fact, talking about newsagents and magazines?

I can add a little to the subject from my own experience. I once ran a school library, an accumulation of books by gift, abandonment and confiscation, with an occasional purchase, that was kept in a room full of typewriters whose original purpose had long been forgotten. As the master-in-charge I had not only to steer my pupils towards suitable books but to disentangle boys who sat down on the keys. One of my difficulties was to persuade them that it was better to read a few books through than to read only the first paragraphs of a lot of books. They argued that authors were



"Where do you meet the silly people you write about, Mr. Murdoch?"

likely to put their best paragraphs at the beginning to attract people. In Scott, an author heavily over-represented, I was closely questioned on whether he had made a success of the career or would have been better advised to try something else. When I tried to sketch his financial history, compression made him sound like Whitaker Wright. Later, in an altogether larger and more alphabetical library, I was surprised by the popularity of Isaak Walton. They did not look the kind of boys to cherish seventeenth-century prose and he was, unless I had read him in blinkers, a very clean author. I found that fishing was a popular school hobby, and the mystery was explained when a boy asked me

whether I had a second volume in which Walton went more thoroughly into fly-fishing.

I often found that no bluff assertion of a writer's excellence would persuade my customers to look at him, and there was a temptation to invent merits that were not strictly supportable from the evidence of his works. Sometimes I was reduced to pointing out that as all the attractive books were out on loan it had become a matter of making the best of a bad bunch and that *Count Robert of Paris* was lighter reading than *Elements of Book-keeping*. The survey says that in the public and grammar school group a quarter of the children claimed to be influenced by

book reviews, but apparently many of the younger children seemed insulted by the question and sturdily insisted that they always made up their own minds. They seemed to regard reviews as assertions of opinion rather than guides to reading. I hope they remain as truculently individual when they meet printed judgments on other subjects.

Rather cruelly, the survey mentions writers who appear to be out of favour. I should like to see a survey of the old, among whom these unfortunates might well be enjoying their original boom, still gulped down with fretful demands for more. There might be quite a career in being a deuterio-Henty or Gene Stratton Porter.

Situation Vacant

By FREDERICK GONNER

APPLICANTS FOR THE POST OF SENIOR LITERARY CRITIC SHOULD ANSWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND SEND THEIR ANSWERS IN TRIPLICATE TO *The Sunday Times* server.

1. Are you a "creative" writer? Give reasons.

2. Write NOT less than three lines on any two of the following:

Dr. Leavis: existentialism; the first and last chapters of *Finnegans Wake*; the Great American Novel; Dylan.

3. After reading *The Outsider* did

you (a) praise it, (b) criticize it adversely, or (c) praise it for some weeks then criticize it adversely?

4. Do you read poetry? Why?

5. Read the following:

Chaos and Anarchy, by John Furious.

V—G—, 18s.

Mr. Furious is a lecturer in English at the University College of Wigan. Characteristically, he wears a motor cyclist's crash helmet at all times and likes to sleep out of doors in a dust-bin. Mr. Furious is eighteen and this is his first novel.

Would you describe Mr. Furious as (a) a writer of major importance, (b) a novelist of genius, (c) the most promising writer of the younger generation, (d) an Angry Young Man, or (e) comparable with Dickens? Give reasons.

Is his novel (a) a masterpiece (if small or minor, say so), (b) a *tour de force*, (c) a major contribution to European literature, or (d) the sort of book which its author at forty may be ashamed of having written?

6. Read the following extract from a publisher's "blurb":

When pretty Jessie Martin, 16-year-old daughter of a Norfolk miller, caught the eye of the handsome, dashing Duc de Guillaume, little did she know that in a few short months she herself would be caught up in the virile, passionate and sinful whirl of seventeenth-century court life.

Wedded in six months to the Duc himself and widowed soon after, with no weapons but her wit and beauty, what could protect this innocent country lass from the machinations of intriguing politicians, the jealousy of court favourites, the rivalry of the King's mistresses and the unwelcome advances of the elderly Lord Bunting? What led this courageous, passionate woman to forsake the arms of a king for a life of danger and poverty with the humble man she loved?

(a) What is this novel about?

(b) Review it in not less than one thousand words.



"Would you accept book tokens?"

7. Read the following letter from a reader:

SIR,—I had occasion recently to open a modern school atlas belonging to my young grandson, now at Sandhurst. I was surprised, I may say shocked, to observe that those territories which fall within the boundaries of the British Commonwealth and Empire are distinguished by the now finally discredited colour of red.

I can only assume that such practices spring either from insidious political motives, which are wholly intolerable and anti-British, or from inexcusable ignorance and crass stupidity on the part of those to whom the education of the young is entrusted.

During the Second World War it was perhaps excusable that colouring of a pale shade of pink be employed, but this continued flaunting of red before the eyes of the young can only arouse a cry of shame in those to whose hearts Queen and Commonwealth lie close.

H. BONNINGTON-SURPLUS

Brigadier (Retd.),

Late Indian Army.

Eastbourne.

Bearing in mind the general policy of *The Sunday Times* select from the following list what you consider to be the best use that could be made of this letter:

- (a) Publication as a Reader's Letter.
- (b) The subject of a leader entitled "Immeasurable Repercussions."
- (c) Discussion by Sciatticus.
- (d) Analysis in the weekly feature *Frequently Enough*.

8. In view of the forthcoming increase in size of *The Sunday Times* from 90 to 110 pages, applicants



"Thank you for buying my book. Whose autograph would you like?"

who possess any of the specialist qualifications listed below should give details in support of their application:

- (a) Personal experience of wild life (not hunting) in Africa.
- (b) Access to the personal war diaries of a high-ranking Service chief of the Second World War (above Major-General's rank or equivalent).
- (c) Personal experience of life "inside" the Soviet Union, Hungary, the Yemen, the Chinese

Republic, the United States, a mental hospital or one of our larger prisons.

- (d) A knowledge of Muscat, jazz or gardening.
- (e) A knowledge of minor English poetry between the years 1400 and 1420, a period not yet fully represented in our series, *Pearls from our Poetic Past*.

Applicant's Signature.....
(or mark with X)

Crumbling Culture

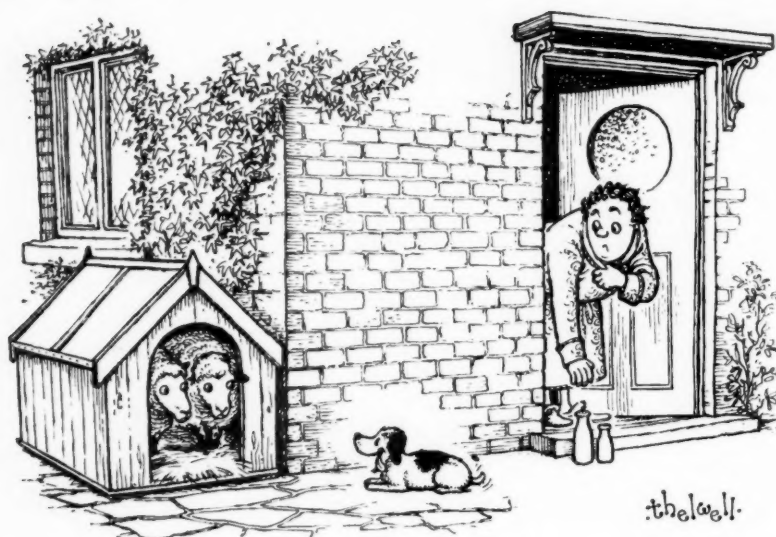
By JULIAN RATHBONE

IT started with a bookshelf under the grandmother clock, made by an Italian called Vasselli of Scarborough. The middle shelf quietly caved in the middle, until it rested in a shallow V-shape on *The Silent Traveller* underneath. Pale yellow sawdust trickled over the books and with a slight sigh Rabindranath slipped to the floor. My prospective father-in-law did not pause in his gentle lecture on companionate marriage to which Penelope and I were

listening like dutiful children. His wispy wife blinked a resigned "Oh, dear," and looked away. Then the near-side leg went and *The Science of Life* joined Rabindranath. "Oh, dear," she repeated, "George, let us do something." "Yes dear, but not at their price to purge the house," said father-in-law. "Let us wait for them to climb down. Lawrence is fun for a while, but you can't dance nude to highland cattle at fifty, nor—um—decorate each other

with daisy-chains in suburban gardens." Penelope and I stood up and Van Gogh's Yellow Chair slid down the wall as the picture-rail gave. The shock was too much for the frame and it let out the glass which promptly broke its heart on a plaster cast of Nefertiti. "Darling, let's wash up," said Penelope.

We usually took our time in the kitchen after meals. They kept us at a distance and this was our first opportunity to reaffirm Lawrence after an



hour of companionship. But we had scarcely set down the coffee-tray when we heard an ominous jangling from the sitting-room. Back we rushed, but it was only father-in-law helping grandmother Vasselli off the wall. "Just in case the rail gets worse," fluttered his wife. "Mother, darling, nothing more will go now: three at once is the most we can expect." "Don't be too sure," said father-in-law. "The rot is everywhere." There was a low rumble in the pipes and a warning crack from upstairs. "I'll go," I said calmly, as though the telephone had rung.

Only one stair gave under me on the way up, in spite of more creaks and crashes and a sound like a young waterfall. In the back bedroom, Penelope's, a split had appeared in the ceiling: not one of your third-class boarding-house cracks but a real one that I felt I should have been able to see through. Water was pouring quite freely on to Penelope's dressing table. Chanel Number Five remained aloof and dignified but

Lady Chatterley was, for once, ashamed of herself. I weighed them in the balance and took the Lady. As I shut the door, wet plaster was falling fast.

Downstairs the family, like the house, were fidgeting. Prospective mother-in-law was taking imitation Della Robbia off the shelf above the fireplace and stacking them in one corner. "I wouldn't stand on a chair," I said, dropping my bedraggled heroine on a pile of Shaws. "It's rather serious; the ceiling is giving upstairs, and I think the cisterns are falling through. I'll turn off the gas, electricity and water, if Penelope will ring up the fire people or someone." Penelope showed fright and mutiny. "Darling, the telephone is under the stairs." "I've got some insurance somewhere," said father-in-law.

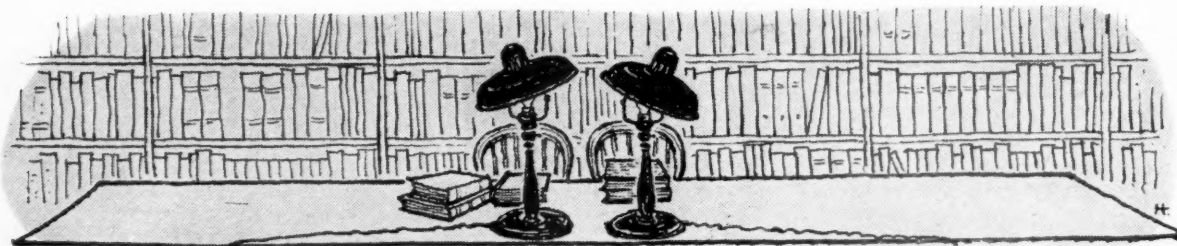
Soon we were out on the lawn, standing in the night breathing the sickly smell of stock and luminous tobacco plants. Firemen were puzzled but sympathetic as father-in-law said

"You won't need hoses, you know, it's worms." The roof was sinking on one side, silhouetted against a red August moon. Tiles were sliding off. A fireman walked into the ornamental pond and stood, blossoming with blasphemy, in the water-lilies. The house groaned and crumbled. Another fireman emerged with the records of Façade, and added them to the pile in front of us. Mother-in-law was keeping a grip on herself for once. "And if you can manage it, there is an unfinished home-made rug in the dining-room." "And a complete *Scrutiny*, bound," threw in father-in-law hopefully. I was quarrelling with Penelope: "Bed-side reading, however exciting, is dispensable, but darling, my clothes, perfume and, hell, my make-up . . ." she ended in a scream.

The house had had enough. It echoed her shout and every remaining ceiling collapsed. There was a pause, then it gave a tired shudder like a sick man heaving, and shed the rest of the roof. For two minutes it rumbled in agony; at length the noise, and the house, subsided. Dust rose in the still air and veiled the blushing moon. Father-in-law wailed to the night "They have forgotten Woolf and Forster."

I took them to my new chrome and Perspex flat, which I was preparing for Penelope. It all seemed so clean and secure with its bright symbolists and severe furniture, and soon we were drinking Espresso coffee and listening to *musique concrète* on my hi-fi. The family were arguing viciously about the neglected rot. "You won't find woodworm here," I said, admiring the frank honesty of the place, though I say it as shouldn't.

But I must confess my hand shook when I saw chrome peeling and rust showing through. I carelessly covered the blemish with *Look Back in Anger* and I hope no one will notice.





Writers and Artists Crossword

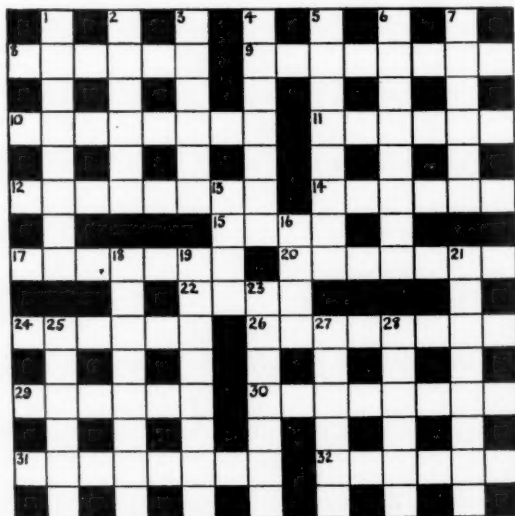
"RICH IN GOOD WORKS."

All solutions are names of writers or artists (in the broadest sense). Clues are titles of or quotations from their works. Answers to clues in italics are Christian names, of which one became hyphenated with the surname.

ACROSS

8. The Broken Cistern. (6)
9. Comic History of England. (1, 7)
10. "Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing throats." (8)
11. Variations on a Personal Theme. (6)
12. L'Après-midi d'un Faune. (8)
14. Sophonisbe. (6)

15. *A Silent Greeting.* (4)
17. Milestones. (7)
20. The Tyrannicides. (7)
22. Youth at the Prow and Pleasure at the Helm. (4)
24. Lavender Hill Mob. (6)
26. An Atlas-History of the Second Great War. (8)
29. "Glory be to God for dappled things." (6)
30. Belfrage. (8)
31. *An American Tragedy.* (8)
32. Poor Man's Tapestry. (6)



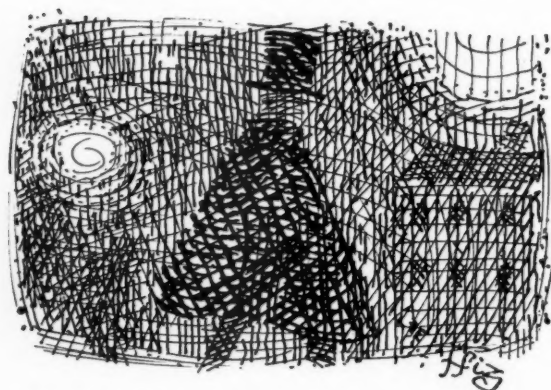
DOWN

1. "I could not love thee (Dear) so much
Lov'd I not honour more." (8)
2. The Road to Wigan Pier. (6)
3. The Barretts of Wimpole Street. (6)
4. The Sistine Madonna. (7)
5. In Kedar's Tents. (8)
6. "Such and so various are the tastes of man." (8)
7. As It Happened. (6)
13. "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding
great joy" (as commonly abbreviated). (4)
16. The Face of Mother India. (4)
18. Public Faces. (8)
19. "Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters." (8)
21. Chronicles of Carlingford. (8)
23. The Middle-aged Man on the Flying Trapeze. (7)
25. "Eh bien, let us take the second problem first as the easiest
of solution." (6)
27. Butterfly's Ball. (6)
28. *Le Lac de Cygnes, Giselle, etc.* (6)

Solution next week



Which of these characters is the Odd Man Out?



Identify this well-known character from the novels

A Dickens QUIZ



This is Sarah Gamp. With which of the following articles is she associated?

- (a) Mosquito Net
- (b) Surf Board
- (c) Umbrella
- (d) Combine Harvester



Who is this?

- (a) Charles Dickens
- (b) Emlyn Williams



Which of these young ladies is not a Dickens heroine?

Millinery for Men

By ALISON ADBURGHAM

"I LIKE you in a hat," she smiles, handing him his snap-brim. It is the new show-card issued by the Hatters' Information Centre, and the burden of its message is significant. Hitherto young men have been told that if they want to get ahead they must get a hat; now it is being subtly suggested that they must get a hat if they want to get a girl. The significance of this is that it reflects the shift in the balance of power between the sexes: there are no longer any surplus women; there is an increasing surplus of men. It follows that there will be an increasing amount of masculine peacocking for position.

Brighter suits and breezier overcoats; nattier shirts and hattier headgear . . . all these are inevitable corollaries to a shortage of eligible women. The necessity for men to attract attention may even force them to invest hats with the importance of millinery, no less. And it is relevant to remember that millinery originally included all those modish fandangies which used to be made in Milan: ties and tippets, gloves and bonnets, ribbons and laces and all the other garnishings for sweet pretty faces. In fact a milliner's shop was a fancy goods shop, and it will be a happy day when men's hats are fancy goods again—*again*, because in the past they have at times been very fancy. Velvet and fur, ribbons and jewels, they have had it all before in Elizabethan and Caroline times; and now, with the benefits of modern drip-dry velvets, nylon fur, and inexpensive costume jewellery, there is every encouragement to bring men's crowning glories back again.

And feathers, too: from sweeps of ostrich to the modest peep of a game-bird's feather, men's hats have in every century been embellished by a varying amount of plumage. And yet no bloomage, never any bloomage! There are exceptions, of course, but only in love and war: we remember the Wars of the Roses, and we think of the country lad who sticks a buttercup in his cap. The get-ahead-in-a-hat young man of to-day, who naturally intends to gather a rosebud wife and not be left with the choice of a few late chrysanthemums, should seriously study the language of flowers. The day may dawn

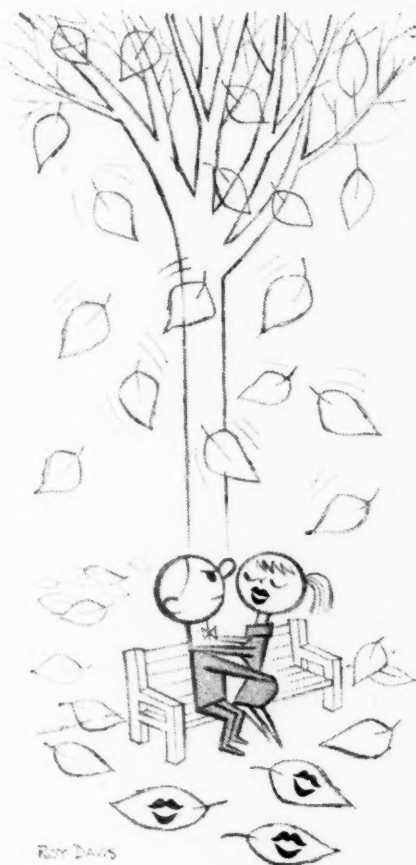
in this very decade when Scotts' window in Piccadilly will display millinery for men featuring perhaps not buttercups but sophisticated floral trimmings: a bowler will mount one perfect carnation to match the carnation in the buttonhole; a Homburg will sport a contemporary flowering cactus.

Scotts, guardians of tradition though they be, are yet capable of rising to the challenge of our times. This is shown by their present window display, a splendid show of deerstalkers for open-car motorists—such darling deerstalkers, with scarves to match—and amongst them the chic-est sealskin cap, a hat for a heart-throb if ever there was one. The fur cap is a style much favoured in Scandinavia; in shape it is more or less a Cossack, with a deep turn-up and a jaunty centre divide. Inside Scotts there are no signs of change or shifting values. If requested they will supply a Robin Hood or a Mambo; but on the whole their clients are more concerned about the relative merits of the smooth or rough-surfaced bowler, the curled-brim or only slightly curled Anthony Eden, the grey or the black topper, the narrow band or the cord trimming to the informal or country snap-brim. And this sombre traditionalism is also the atmosphere of London's other ancient hatters' haunts, of Barnards in Jermyn Street and Locks of St. James's—Locks, whose daring introduction of the rough-surfaced bowler was the most talked-of hatter's innovation of this century.

In contrast to this dignified decorum the fashion show put on at Londonderry House by the Hatters' Information Centre was a veritable gala fête. Here the Robin Hood and the Mambo were confidently tipped as likely to become established hat styles, having already proved themselves, we were told, to be the best sellers introduced since before the war. The Robin Hood is a very small, close-fitting hat with a close high side and back brim. Originally intended as a "pleasure and leisure" hat, it is now modified for town and business wear—for which towns and about what business was not specified. The Mambo is a flat-top, with a brim which is also almost flat, and it is easily recognizable by its broad fancy-patterned ribbon,

usually red. Then out of Mambo, this season, has come a new style: the Lo-top. This is a sleek, close-fitting model, flat on the top; but, unlike the Mambo, it has a circular dent round the crown called a "telescope" crease. It may have a pinch at the front, a pear-drop shaped crown, or small side-dents. The centre pinch makes the hat easy to lift in greeting a lady; and the courtesy of this gesture, contrasted with the predicament of the hatless man, is strongly emphasized by those whose business it is to promote the ubiquitous wearing of hats.

The Lo-tops are particularly favoured by motorists who find a high-crowned hat gets knocked as they get in and out of their cars; and the narrower brims (sometimes as narrow as 1½ inches) also help to give the fashionable "less hat" look. Among the many variations of the Lo-top shown at Londonderry House there was a flat-top Homburg for older



business-men and a courageously coloured range of velours: a crimson velour mounted a duck's feather; a black one was dressed with a scarlet cord. Hat ribbons tended to be duotone, with fancy criss-crossing or pleating; cords of all thicknesses appeared on country hats, often knotted at the centre back; and here and there a curled cock's feather coyly beckoned.

But to pick out these twopence coloureds is to give an unbalanced picture. On the whole the impression at this man's hat show was one of penny plains: sober browns, greys and—above all—soft quiet greens; because greens, they say, can now be worn with any colour of suit. All these are the shades of forest fungi, and the ordinary woman, untrained in the subtle niceties of crown and brim and dent, may well

wonder what *have* men's hats got that fungoid growths have not. We who are used to the delicious dainty delights of feminine hat shows, may well mutter:

*In what
Revolting fancy were the Forms begot
Of all these monsters?*

and in questioning thus we hit upon one of the basic reasons why most men's hats are so lacking in elegance and élan: it is because their designers are anonymous back-room boys. We do not *know* in whose fancy their forms were begot; whereas with feminine millinery we recognize at once a flight of Madame Simone Mirman's fancy, or an expression of the ego of Aage Thaarup, Rudolf, Madame Vernier, Edward Harvane.

The difference between women's millinery and men's hats is as the

difference between *haute cuisine* and plain cooking. The milliner's soufflé, the Charlotte Russe, the garnished goulash, the simple but perfect meringue . . . these are confections, creations. But the hatter's pork-pie, what *is* there in that? To be fair, it is not only the makers who lack imagination. At the purchasing end, also, their customers want the romantic approach. To a woman the choice of a new hat is an indulgence of self-expression, most rewardingly indulged in when in the roseate state following lunch with an old flame. And this should be also true for a man. Chosen in the right mood it will be the right hat. Especially is this so if, as he studies himself in the hatter's full-length mirror, he hears in imagination a soft, sweet murmur in his ear: *I like you in a hat.*



"... and should I fall please help me smartly back into the saddle, Amen."



MY Tibetan friend had been absent for some time in his own country. It was therefore a year since he had attended a meeting of Parliament. "The last time that I was here," he confided to me, "I heard the Prime Minister saying that you must act without American support. All the Members behind him cheered. Now here is the Prime Minister saying that you are dependent for your defence on America and must surrender some of your sovereignty, and again the Members behind him cheer. I am afraid that in Tibet we are still very much out of the world. I had not heard that in the interval you had had a general election and that there was now a whole new lot of Conservative Members and a new Government, following the opposite policy from that of a year ago."

I assured him that nothing of the sort had happened.

"But that Prime Minister whom I heard speaking," he said, "he is not the same Prime Minister as a year ago."

"No," I agreed, "it is true that we have a new Prime Minister, but all the Ministers who are in office were in office then and the Members behind them are all the same."

"Then I must have misheard what the Prime Minister said," said the Tibetan. "Very likely that was the explanation, for he was reading it all off and, to tell the truth, he did not read very distinctly. But I thought that I heard him say that 'when the United States and the United Kingdom work together things are apt to go better.' He said that it was a turning-point. I know that he said that it was a turning-point, because he said that twice."

"Yes, he said that," I agreed, "but then Dr. Hill explained that of course he did not mean it."

"Why did the Members who cheered a year ago when you acted without the United States not boo to-day when he said that you must act with the United States?" he asked.

"Well," I said, "Lord Hinchingsbrooke, figuratively speaking, did."

"Is Lord Hinchingsbrooke a very clever man?" he asked.

"Well——" I began.

"At least he does not just cheer whatever his leaders say without caring what it is," said the Tibetan.

"No, you can certainly say that he does not do that," I agreed.

"It seems that both parties are promising to increase everybody's pension," said the Tibetan, "and I

heard Mr. Marquand say that the Government was niggardly. Do the politicians pay these pensions out of their own pockets?"

"No," I explained, "they are paid by the people who receive the pensions—partly as contributions out of their wages and partly as taxes."

"But would not a lot of people sooner spend their own money now," asked the Tibetan, "when it still buys something, rather than have it given back to them again later on when it will buy much less?"

"If you let them do that," I explained, "you would undermine the whole foundation of the Welfare State on which all parties are agreed."

"So I suppose they must be given more wages to pay their higher contributions, and then, when prices go up, they have to be given higher pensions again to pay the higher prices."

"That's how it has worked in the past," I said, "but it's not going to be like that in the future because of the Plateau."

"We also have a Plateau in Tibet," said the Tibetan. "I went to your House of Lords and there I heard a Lord Waldegrave speaking. He said that he did not want a comprehensive plan. He said that there was a man three hundred and fifty years ago who had a comprehensive plan. What did he mean by that?"

"He was referring," I explained, "to a man called Guy Faux who wanted to blow up Parliament with gunpowder."

"And he put it in that funny way for a joke," said the Tibetan. "Is Lord Waldegrave a very funny man?"

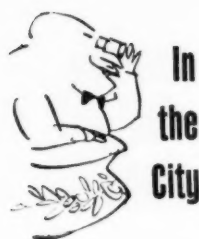
"Yes, as a matter of fact," I said, "I think that he is rather funny."

"I think so too," said the Tibetan. "And now I must be going back to Tibet."

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



G.I. Setwyn Lloyd and P.B.I. Dulles



What is a Bank?

WHEN a building society runs into trouble—and inevitably under present conditions one of the movement's smaller fry does so from time to time—we are appropriately alarmed. There is something about the word "building" that suggests inviolability and permanence, and rumours of a crack in the façade are apt to fill our pessimistic ears with the din of crumbling, collapsing masonry.

When a bank is in difficulties we panic. A bank! A bank obviously is more durable than a building, an impregnable fortress of financial solidity and probity. When Stephen Leacock poked his damp ball of money at the accountant and said "Deposit it" he had in mind the laying of foundation stones, the transmutation of his dollars into imperishable gold, a stake in immortality.

Banks, we insist, shouldn't have difficulties.

So the difficulties of the Ideal Bank Ltd., of Birmingham, which the other week closed its withdrawals counter, made most of us think twice about the security of our deposits and overdrafts. I know that I gave my bank, one of the Big Five, a long and searching look when I passed it a week last Thursday.

The Ideal is a private bank. It functions in much the same way as a trustee savings bank, accepting deposits from the public and investing them in gilt-edged securities, but its business is not governed by the various Acts regulating the trustee banks and in consequence its health is not protected by Government guarantee. It is said to be the only bank of its kind in the country.

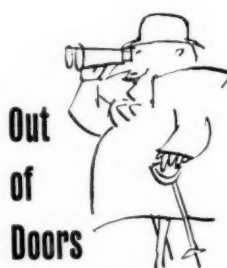
Private savings banks flourished until 1863, when the Post Office began to compete for the custom of the small depositor. In that year there were six hundred and twenty-two such banks in business, by 1905 there were only two hundred and twenty-four, and with the introduction of Savings Certificates during World War I and the slump in consols in the post-war period their number again diminished rapidly.

There is, however, nothing to prevent

the opening of new banks. The word itself has yet to be adequately defined in law, and any company duly registered and obeying the statutory regulations about half-yearly returns can call itself a bank. Moreover there is no central control of the operations of such institutions.

Can this loose arrangement be defended? Does the public sometimes read more into the word bank than is actually there? A year ago the Government announced that new legislation would be introduced to regulate the business of finance companies, but nothing so far has been heard of it.

The building societies are under the paternal eye of the Registrar of Friendly Societies. It might well be to the



The End of the Flat

MID-NOVEMBER comes to a chorus of sighing; it marks the end of the flat-racing season and March is a whole winter away. The jumping enthusiasts now have the field to themselves, and as tweeds and shooting-sticks take over it is as if business is giving way to pleasure, with paddock chit-chat concerning itself with horses rather than odds.

During the last few years a series of mixed meetings have been introduced into the back end of the flat season and these help to make the change less abrupt. A *mélange* of one or two jump races thrown in among the flat races attracts the devotees of both branches, but however mixed the meeting the two crowds do not mingle; each disappears, reappears and disappears again like lovers looking for each other in a Shakespeare comedy.

There is more that keeps them apart than the difference of their interests. The jumping season has hardly begun to warm up, but flat racing, in its dying days, is a desperate hustle. Owners, trainers, jockeys and horses, with nothing to save themselves for, jostle for the last prizes to be won. While a few sodden enthusiasts squelch among the dead leaves in the paddock and a few more line the bars, the weighing

advantage of the general public if the entire field of H.P., industrial and investment banks, and finance companies were similarly brought within his ken.

The general public, not only trade unionists—as correspondents to *The Times* have been pointing out—is suffering from "economic illiteracy." It needs educating, and it also needs protecting. At a time when economic policy can play overnight havoc with the value of all marketable securities it is essential that speculation with money deposited in good faith by economic illiterates should be carefully controlled. It would help if deposits accepted from the public were safeguarded by schemes of compulsory insurance.

MAMMON

* * *

room is urgent with activity. Seemingly countless jockeys and their valets scurry about with their equipment; somehow the clerk of the scales weighs all the jockeys and checks their colours between answering all the questions that everyone has kept for the last minute; off-stage the stewards and stewards' secretaries hold an inquiry; the judge, inactive for a moment, recalls the sleepy contentment of Folkestone in August; and the starter prepares to hack off again into the mist and drizzle ignoring an old friend's old joke that *he's* got nothing to worry about—who's going to see a false start in this weather? A little later, out at the start, he somehow achieves a straight line with his thirty or forty runners and gets them off. Down at the finish nothing can be seen for a while, then all at once the horses loom, become solid and rush past, mud flying. Excitement flares like a spurt of flame from a dead fire, and the season returns to its chorus of sighs.

There are the sighs of owners whose last hope has finished among the ruck, sighs of relief from starter, judge, officials, and those jockeys and horses who do not relish running in the wet; and, as a thorough-bass, the year-long sighing of the men who might have placed their money to better advantage.

PETER BORRES

S S

"Sir Graham Cunningham, as chief of Triplex Safety Glass, has spent nearly 30 years serving the motor industry . . . When you meet someone like that the question that springs to mind is: 'How do you see the car of the future?' . . . 'More glass' was his prompt reply . . ."

News Chronicle

That sprang pretty nimbly, too.



CRITICISM

BOOKING OFFICE

As I was Saying . . .

The Maxims of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld: Translated into English by Constantine FitzGibbon. Wingate, 15/-

TURNING wearily," wrote Mr. T. S. Eliot in one of his poems, "as one would turn to nod good-bye to Rochefoucauld, if the street were time and he at the end of the street."

Even if one likes maxims—which for my part I do—one must admit this certain suggestion of fatigue after sitting down and reading six hundred and twenty-seven of them. Of course no one was intended to do that. The maxim was produced at a party where everyone knew everyone else very well—or at least knew the terms upon which the other people in the room lived their lives—and the company then settled down to discuss some such crack as "Avarice, more than open-handedness, is the opposite of economy," or "The reason why a lover and his mistress are never bored in one another's company is that the talk is constantly of themselves."

As Mr. Constantine FitzGibbon points out in his excellent introduction, the maxims were not intended to be the final word on the subject in the manner in which, say, Nietzsche tries to embody in the smallest possible space his findings on a given matter. On the contrary, they were meant to be violently argued out; and it would be hard to deny that they compare favourably with a great deal of the material that people argue about on the air and elsewhere, in our own day.

François, Duc de la Rochefoucauld (1613-1680), came of one of the most ancient families of France. They were Protestants and his great-grandfather had been murdered on St. Bartholomew's Eve. However, his grandfather had followed Henri IV in his change of religion (foreseeing perhaps that his descendant might find Paris worth a mass observation), and his father had been created duke for particularly

ruthless suppression of the Huguenots of Poitou.

"Despite all the advantages that nature may bestow upon a man, he still needs luck if he is to be a hero." Rochefoucauld himself was a good example of this. He was a French duke when France was the greatest country of Europe and dukes at their top premium in France; he was good-looking, brave, energetic, intelligent, a great success with the ladies and at the same time apparently happily



married with eight children. Yet nothing ever quite came right. His military career was not successful; high office in politics was refused him; his wife was never granted, like other ladies of her rank, the distinction of remaining seated in the Queen's presence. He was therefore admirably placed for appreciating the painful side of a favoured position in life.

"There are people who would never have fallen in love had they not heard love talked about" is perhaps his most famous contribution to that very popular subject. Less known but how infinitely apt the words: "Why is it that our memory, capable of retaining

the minutest details of what has befallen us, yet fails to remind us how often we have already recounted them to the same person?"

This volume contains, as well as the *Réflexions Morales*, Rochefoucauld's self-portrait. He notes: "I am scarcely susceptible to pity, and would wish not to feel it at all. On the other hand there are no lengths to which I will not go in order to alleviate the afflictions of others; and I really believe that in such cases one should do everything, even to the extent of showing a great deal of compassion for them in their misfortunes; but I also believe that one should be satisfied with the display and avoid, most carefully, the true feeling." A bit chilly, perhaps.

Mr. FitzGibbon has brought off a neat translation. Only once, when he uses the phrase "enthused by passion" (for "*qui a de la passion*"), did a word slightly jar.

One must already begin to think of Christmas presents, and the Maxims would not be bad for the stocking of young-marrieds. ("It is possible to find women who have never had a love-affair; but a woman who has only had one is indeed a rarity") or bachelor uncles ("Old people love to give good advice: it compensates them for their inability nowadays to set a bad example"); while round the Christmas Tree no one could fail to benefit from the realization that: "Satisfaction derives from tasting, not from the dish tasted; happiness comes of having what we like, not in owning what others find desirable."

ANTHONY POWELL

Observation

Ten Pollitt Place. C. H. B. Kitchin. Secker and Warburg, 15/-

Mr. Kitchin's work falls into three categories, which only occasionally overlap: novels of character with an element of wry comedy and a strong sense of social values; stories with symbolic, even supernatural overtones; and detective thrillers of extraordinarily high calibre, such as *The Cornish Fox*, which has

scarcely been bettered since its publication. His latest novel belongs to the first category, though the climax is highly dramatic; there are two violent deaths and a near-miss; and the machinations of Hugo, the cherub-faced, crippled boy of fifteen, might well belong to a more sinister type of fiction, were his exploits not conceived "with the hope of saving the big red-headed dustman from the perils of what the Sunday newspapers called 'the vice of the streets.'" Excellently-observed Kensingtonian backgrounds, a diversity of characters, including a "cultivated novelist and former *enfant terrible* of the 'twenties," and a well-forged chain of incident make this an outstanding variation on the seedy boarding-house theme—of which, nevertheless, Mr. Patrick Hamilton remains the acknowledged master. J. M-R.

My Betters. George W. Bishop. Heinemann, 25/-

This is not a continuous autobiography but a series of chapters describing the writer's association with various famous people, with a short introductory account of his early life and a few chapters of travel notes. One of the characters is Shaw, and Mr. Bishop quotes a considerable amount of his correspondence and conversation, enough to interest collectors of Shaviana. There are interesting glimpses of the early stage-history of *Journey's End*, of productions of *Hamlet* at Elsinore and of special theatrical performances arranged by Mr. Bishop on behalf of the *Daily Telegraph*. There are vivid chapters on James Agate and George Moore, who said "It is better to love the good than hate the wicked . . . That's good, isn't it? . . . It's just the sort of thing Jesus might have said."

The interest of the book does not rise above the interest of the various actions or remarks of the characters mentioned. Some hesitancy about intruding, some muffling of a personal voice, robs it of unity and drive; it could do with more of its author in it. R. G. G. P.

This Side of the Truth. Elizabeth Montagu. Heinemann, 15/-

A young creature, shades of the prison house closing in, who walks "in a strange sort of place," seeing much and understanding little, tells this story. Sarah Carrington, only child of divorced parents, goes with her stepfather Mark and her mother, a first-prize specimen of the nagging woman, to stay in the South of France at the villa of a middle-aged writer. Other members of his informal and rather uncomfortable house-party are an engaged couple, a hairy gentleman named Kaplan, important in the world of finance, and the lovely, gentle, unhappy Catherine. Sarah, seldom very clear as to what is happening around her, an uncertainty in which we perforce must sometimes share, becomes vaguely aware of Mark's love for Catherine and her

mother's furious jealousy. The grown-up people involve her in their affairs and, tormented, uncertain, longing for the safety of being loved and wanted by someone, she precipitates the inevitable crisis. Here is the strange butterfly of adolescence caught with incredible skill and set up on its pin for our inspection.

B. E. S.

Not Waving but Drowning. Stevie Smith. André Deutsch, 12/6

Rather dotty poems breathy with "oh"s and interspersed with very dotty drawings, most of which look as if they must be self-portraits, make an odd vehicle for conveying a genuine and, for the most part, tragic conception of life. Once one has learned one's way round her Klee-like world one is constantly startled by the intensity of Miss Smith's ideas: of the deathly quality of loneliness; how all delight, in love, water, cats, the countryside and so on, is only a breather, as it were, in the business of contemplating a world that is wicked and slipping down towards death; that people aren't really rational at all, and anyway "spoil the beautiful geological scene"; but that a lot that happens to them is funny as well as tragic and deserves a laugh. After a bit I found myself reading her poems several times with great enjoyment and even quite liking some of the pictures. P. D.

Those Without Shadows. Françoise Sagan. John Murray, 9/6

Mlle. Sagan began her astonishing literary career at the age of eighteen. Now, at twenty-two, she publishes her third novel. Sad to relate, she is developing no depth or breadth of outlook to replace that attribute which contributed most to her success—extreme youth. Her writing retains its limpid style and

confident statement of behaviour well observed, but it remains as trivial as ever. Indeed this new work, in which the emotional content is more thinly because more widely spread, impresses the reader as even more trifling than the analysed single relationship of each of the previous novels. Here we follow several rootless, and apparently jobless, men and women getting into and out of each other's beds. Only one character, an actress, gives a thought to anything but sex, and her tendency to subject her desires to her ambitions is treated with contempt.

One critic has stated that Mlle. Sagan "is as talented as the early Waugh," but if she is a Waugh she is a Waugh without humour. A sobering thought. O. M.

Come Dance With Me. A Memoir. Ninette de Valois. Hamilton, 25/-

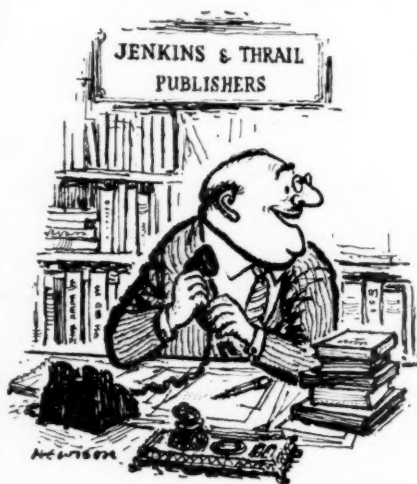
If the sum total of a million different interpretations of experience makes up the stream of life "in its infinite variety of individual living," then Dame Ninette can look back on quite a few thousand contributions to the flow.

A record of an impressively crowded career, shuttling between Kensington and the Old Vic one day, on milk trains between London and Cambridge the next, and then, with the Irish Sea joining in the fun, "bobbing like a cork" between Liverpool and Dublin. The same cheerful buoyancy carries us through her story to date—through a life that she sometimes seems in retrospect to have planned, only to decide again that she has been under the compulsion of some force beyond herself or her advisers. Perhaps it was an unconscious sense of injustice at work—artists often thrive under it—because (she being a girl) the stable-bell was not rung at her birth or the prepared bonfire lit. She has lighted her own bonfire, and its glow illumines the procession of famous names that moves through this book—not names laid up in the mothballs of memory but part of the living record of a great artist's work. J. D.

A Great Trusteeship. M. A. Nigumi. Caravel Press, 18/-

Here is a native of the Sudan educated at Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, coming forward to declare generously and explicitly that British rule in his country was an unmixed blessing, begun in honesty and mutual toleration, concluded with affection and esteem. Commenting against an historical background rather than compiling a coherent history, Mr. Nigumi, refusing to be browbeaten by any scrofulous Egyptian talk about colonial exploitation, singles out name after name among the public servants from this country to whom his vast Sudan is eternally indebted for all the blessings of peaceful progress in education, finance and public health.

Rather endearingly he confesses to



"I say, chap here . . . ex-royal valet, escaped from prison-camp, crossed Pacific on a raft . . ."

moulding his English phrases in the style of his own beautiful flowery Arabic, and here indeed is more than enough of "stainless reputation," "unruffled calm," "unceasing vigil," "lonesome seclusion" and the like, but perhaps for once we can let this pass in a book that any normally modest Briton would dearly like to see in the hands of any American.

C. C. P.

With the Guards to Mexico! Peter Fleming. *Hart-Davis*, 16/-

This haul of Mr. Fleming's shorter pieces happily admits his strangely prophetic story, *The Flying Visit*, published a year before the lunatic arrival of Hess. In this Hitler joins a bombing mission, parachutes from his sabotaged machine into an English horse-pond, and after ingenious indignities grows so embarrassing to the Government that he has to be dropped once more, over East Prussia. It would have made a very funny film; one hopes that somehow it may have reached the Führer's desk.

Another good fantasy describes the downfall of a senior Civil Servant whose left hand becomes sinister in every sense; but the emphasis in this collection is mainly on war. To adventures which must have been alarming at the time, in Norway, Greece and Burma, Mr. Fleming brings his tonic mastery of comic phrase. He is among our most original light essayists, and the striking portrait he includes here of Lord Wavell is a fair sample of his more serious writing.

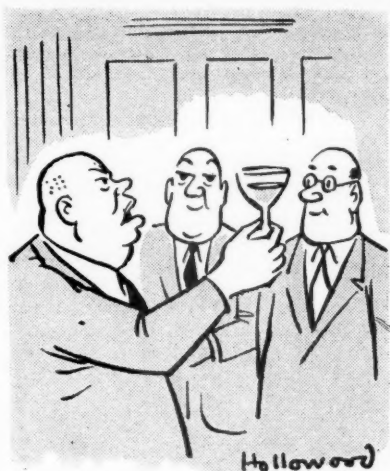
E. O. D. K.

Over Seventy. P. G. Wodehouse. *Herbert Jenkins*, 16/-

The awful thing would be for Wodehouse's autobiography to be like everyone else's. Somewhat consciously, it isn't. If he remembers, he remembers the house where he was born, he forgets to mention it. Parental idiosyncrasies do not appear. Early nannies are non-starters. As an autobiography, in fact, this is a swindle, but it is nice swindling, and the flow of comic ideas seems unchecked; encouraging, this, for humorists who feared that at seventy-six all jokes would be old. There are "digressions" admitted to in the sub-title. They are very, very funny. J. B. B.

A Book of Anecdotes. Daniel George. *Hulton Press*, 18/-

This collection of extracts mingles what Mr. George believes are the best authenticated versions of famous stories with other stories that will be new to anyone whose reading has been less *outré* than his own: the entertainment is dressed with mild scholarship. Some of the items are fairly elaborate settings for verbal retorts, some farcical misadventures; some exhibit famous men in revealing circumstances; some are odd or gruesome. Mr. George has a taste for executions. The book does not, unless I



"And now a toast to the great Soviet hero Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, the inventor of the dog."

read it too eagerly and rapidly to balance anecdote against anecdote, prove or explain anything.

Many of the stories must be half-forgotten, since anecdotal readers have gone out of fashion in schools, and when *John o' London's* died the last home of the literary anecdote, as contrasted with the merry tale for after-dinner speakers, vanished. This defiant gesture against the Puritans of the Library from A Bookman of the Older Sort has, perhaps, just one small virtue beyond frivolity—it is a reminder of the luxuriance of human nature.

R. G. G. P.

The Speaking Garden. Edward Hyams. *Longmans*, 16/-

Mr. Hyams' latest collection of horticultural essays is both a book on how to grow things and a book on why things grow. He ranges happily among history, chemistry and philosophy, but manages to avoid those touches of quaintness with which some writers on gardening sweeten their pills. If he refers to Pliny, for example, it is because he has verified Pliny's statement that the mulberry tree's reputation for prudence rests on its never burgeoning till frosts are over. In the chapter "Muck and Magic" he attempts to hold the balance between the compost mystics and the chemical fanatics, and he offers a reasonable solution for gardeners, making use of the findings of both parties. Mr. Hyams' own experiments in viticulture are well-known and successful, and while pursuing them he has acquired a wide knowledge of the history of the fermented grape. According to Euripides wine would appear to have arrived in Europe suddenly and explosively, with the worship of Dionysus, and the word

itself can be traced back to the Semite root *wain*, not indeed unknown as a pronunciation in English. Mr. Hyams never forgets the pleasures of the table, even when praising the beauty of cabbages, and it would be a very stern ascetic whose mouth did not water at the vision of an arcade covered with climbing strawberries.

V. G. P.

The Midwich Cuckoos. John Wyndham. *Joseph*, 13/6

Mr. John Wyndham, whose first Science Fiction novel was a B.B.C. Book at Bedtime and is now being broadcast as a serial-play, writes in a swift colloquial style, a blend of Balchin and H. G. Wells. Here a sleepy English village is visited by a space-ship diffusing sleeping-gas, and his theme is interplanetary invasion by mass-impregnation. A town in Russia and an Eskimo settlement in Canada are similarly visited, but the Russians and Eskimos act realistically while in Midwich the children are allowed to grow up, adult at the age of nine, possessed of telepathic powers and with golden eyes capable of turning back a bomber-plane or reducing a chief constable to tears. The novel has been bought as screen-material by M.G.M.; and it will be interesting to see how the opening sequences, with the ashamed and indignant "Host-Mothers," are handled in view of the Hayes Code and the ever-active Catholic League of Decency.

J. M-R.

Day of Infamy. Walter Lord. *Longmans*, 18/-

In compiling this record, the author interviewed some six hundred people personally connected with the Pearl Harbour attack. Apart from a brief résumé of the Japanese preparations, Walter Lord relates the events of one day only and does not attempt to discuss the enemy's version. The Japanese say the warning ultimatum was delayed at their own embassy in Washington but received by the Americans in time to cable Hawaii about an hour and a half before the attack began.

A. V.

The Child of Fortune. P. B. Abercrombie. *Gollancz*, 16/-

Both in manner and purpose Miss Abercrombie is a very serious writer, perhaps over-serious, for she produces an effect of greater sobriety than is becoming in the novel. Against that she has an impressive sense of the oddity of human behaviour and relationships, and this world in which we have our being. The first part of *The Child of Fortune* gives us, together with the merits of her previous books, the additional interest of an exotic background—the American countryside. How seldom in fiction do we see the strangeness of this through English eyes!

The "child of fortune" is an American youth, born of an incestuous relationship, and the author admirably conveys his

attraction for almost every woman he meets. The novel comprises the conflicts and emotions of his several affairs. The minor characters, mostly women, are well differentiated and all convincing. Why then, in retrospect, does the book seem so lifeless? Apart from the lack of humour, there is too great an absorption with the architecture of the sentences, a straining after "style." Lacking vividness and spontaneity, the writing produces an effect of construction through which the life-blood cannot flow. This is a not infrequent fault in the work of intelligent writers and it is one that is usually lessened by time. O. M.

A Persian Spring. Wilfred Blunt. Barrie, 25/-

Mr. Blunt, drawing master at Eton, spent the spring of last year in Persia (or Iran) and Afghanistan, an experience "midway between tourism and exploration." Apart from being expelled from Syria as an "undesirable," exploited by rude, incompetent guides, disgusted by the sanitation and accused by Arabs of being a Jew, Mr. Blunt had an enjoyable time.

The writing itself is too often left in the form of somewhat jerky notes, and as a whole is less evocative than the author's fifty-five wonderful photographs which surely justify all his trials. He has

nevertheless given us a series of quick, this-happened-to-me sketches, full of energy and crabbled individuality, which tell us a good deal about the minor and decorative arts.

Persia calls for a rich and luminous prose that would match, say, the tilework in the Friday Mosque at Isfahan or the exquisite detail of the Gauhar Shad Mosque at Meshed. Only a great descriptive writer, however, could make us accept without reservation the miseries and splendours of so alien a culture.

R. G.

The Oxford Companion to the Theatre.

Edited by Phyllis Hartnoll. Oxford, 45/-

In a supplement to its second edition this fat encyclopædia has caught up with its more startling omissions, such as Peggy Ashcroft, Arthur Miller and Terence Rattigan, and is thereby much improved. It is a very useful member of the theatre shelf, for it contains an enormous amount of assorted information from all over the world about almost every aspect of the stage, although still remaining silent on the Method. Many biographies of the lesser dramatists and actors of the past are included. The new edition gains by one hundred and fifty-four illustrations covering the development of the theatre, and a supplementary bibliography.

E. O. D. K.

AT THE PLAY

The Queen and the Welshman
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)
Hedda Gabler (VANBRUGH)

NOW and then a play wins by the simple sincerity with which it develops a good human situation. *The Queen and the Welshman*, by Rosemary Anne Sisson, is of this kind. When I reviewed it at Edinburgh I thought it "gentle, even a little solemn, but admirably avoiding fustian both in language and background," and at Hammersmith my impression was the same.

Miss Sisson has been clever to find in history a drama little known to the public yet important to all of us, for it gave us the Tudors. After Henry V's death his widow (the princess in Shakespeare's French lesson) is all but a prisoner to the Regent, Gloucester. The House of Lancaster is still on top but only just; and, fearing an ambitious husband, Gloucester forbids her re-marriage until her son comes of age. She falls in love with a professional soldier named Owen Tudor, who is proud only of being Welsh and hates politics; they marry secretly, and for seven years live in blissful seclusion at Hatfield, until a chance piece of gossip brings disaster.

There are few characters in the play, and they are well drawn. The Hatfield idyll is described very naturally, so that it is not a slice of dead history. Katherine and Owen Tudor are overwhelmingly happy together, and their love is direct and unsentimental. And when the crash comes, Gloucester's position is understandable. Blunt and unsentimental, he is sufficiently moved by Tudor's honesty in a fine scene of interrogation to part the lovers only with reluctance, for genuine reasons of State. In many historical plays the issues are so wrapped about with period trimmings that motives must be guessed at; it is the strength of this one that they remain clear-cut, leaving us in sympathy with both sides.

Very sensibly no star has been introduced since Edinburgh into a cast which understands its business. Hilary Liddell and Edward Woodward persuade us that the Tudors were founded in unaffected love, and Villiers, the court spy, and Gloucester are both given a pleasingly modern ring by Jack Rodney and Edward Burnham. Mr. Burnham has produced the play, tactfully though perhaps a trifle slowly, and Michael Trangmar's simple sets fit it perfectly.

Last week we reviewed one group of finalists at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, in *The Pirate*; the other group, returning in triumph from Oslo, has been doing *Hedda Gabler*, and the satisfaction of the Norwegians, who are not easily pleased where Ibsen is concerned, is understandable.

In a way John Fernald's production is a little old-fashioned, for it stresses



Queen Katherine—HILARY LIDDELL

Sir Owen Tudor—EDWARD WOODWARD

(*The Queen and the Welshman*)

the emotional elements in the play rather than the comic. Since Peggy Ashcroft's magnificent demonstration that Hedda can be laughed at without spoiling the dramatic excitement we have forgotten how seriously she used to be treated, as if her boredom were rational and pistol-shooting a normal exercise in Norwegian drawing-rooms. Mr. Fernald's production is somewhere between the two, and it suits Siân Phillips, a young actress who is clearly destined to take us with assurance through heavy weather. Miss Phillips' performance grows in power. She plays a Hedda, passionate more than mocking, with remarkable authority and a judgment surprising in one so new to the stage. The intrigues with Lövborg and Brack are handled smoothly; the risks are calculated, and her sense of private enjoyment at the calculation comes through.

The measure of this company lies in the difficulty of remembering its youth. Donald Burton is a persuasive Brack, Edward de Souza a Lövborg with real fire in him, and Fredrik Ohlsson bumbles with a touch of Ustinov. The R.A.D.A. method of giving its pupils, in its charming little theatre, frequent practice on audiences obviously pays dividends.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

All three parts of *Henry VI* (Old Vic—23/10/57) fill two exciting evenings. *Roar Like a Dove* (Phoenix—2/10/57) is lively and very well acted, and *At the Drop of a Hat* (Fortune—16/1/57) an original two-man revue.

ERIC KEOWN



AT THE PICTURES

Porte des Lilas
The Birthday Present

FROM the first moment, when we are shown a Paris street-corner scene in the quarter that is called *Porte des Lilas* (Director: René Clair), we are back in the René Clair world, which has so many visual affinities with the world of Chaplin. Here are the vaguely artificial-looking, rather greily and mistily lit, very slightly fantastically exteriors; here are the more solid and literal interiors in a light similarly unobtrusive and without striking contrast, where the bottles at the back of a bar are in no less sharp focus than the man playing a guitar beside the stove in front of it. Conditioned by years of films much more visually dramatic, full of bright areas of light and deep velvety blacks (and I am not belittling that quality, for striking visual design can mean a very great deal), we are distracted at first sight by the thought that this looks old-fashioned; but the plain fact is that, however much visual pleasure can mean—and *The Pride and the Passion*, for instance, kept me watching to the end without giving me any other kind at all—narrative skill,

character playing, imaginative direction, perceptive detail and mood can mean very much more. After a minute or two of *Porte des Lilas* we are interested and amused by the characters, gripped by the story and actively enjoying it.

It is a matter of adjustment to the Clair world, that's all, and so effective is the collaboration between the brilliant director and the brilliant actor (Pierre Brasseur) that one's adjustment is unconscious and almost immediate. M. Brasseur is on the screen for most of the film: he is Juju, the good-natured, lazy, sponging butt of the locality who divides his time between the bistro and the battered little house of the friend he calls 'The Artist' (Georges Brassens). ('L'artiste' might perhaps be better represented here by the affectionately facetious word "maestro," for the man is a musician, and sings reflectively to his guitar). Each is the other's best friend; and it is this relationship, among other things, that is interrupted by the fugitive gunman who hides in The Artist's cellar while both of them, on principle, do what they can to save him from recapture.

Juju's life is transformed: he has a responsibility, he is needed, he can be of use to someone. M. Brasseur beautifully conveys the touchingly comic pleasure of the simple, warm-hearted man, and M. Clair (who also wrote the script) beautifully shows the effect of the change in him on other people—including the Artist, who becomes disapprovingly jealous. The gunman himself is quite hard-boiled and selfish, and the climax is the shocked realization of this by Juju, who had been sentimentally arranging his getaway with a local damsel smitten by his glamour. It is a perfect ironic comedy, rich in character, full of amusing incident and comic invention, and impossible not to enjoy.

You will have heard, to put it mildly, that there is a huge new colour version of Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (Director: Henry King); I found this unsatisfactory in the same way as *The Pride and the Passion*—good spectacular travelogue stuff interspersed with slow heavy duologues far less reminiscent of Hemingway than his imitators are, and ending with (of all things) an implied plug for the Church, delivered with a stern look by one member of the Lost Generation to another. No; give me *The Birthday Present* (Director: Pat Jackson), modestly unobtrusive by comparison but ten times as gripping, because it tells a straightforward, credible, uncomplicated but developing story with imaginative skill. It is about a man (Tony Britton) who yields to the temptation to smuggle a birthday-present watch back from a business trip to Germany, and gets caught. We simply see what happens to him: he has the bad luck to come up before magistrates inclined to make an example, he is sent to prison, and he is "a man with a



[*Porte des Lilas*

Juju—PIERRE BRASSEUR

record" when he comes out. Bad luck, yes, but not in the least improbable; and the strength of this piece is in the intelligent, perceptive way it makes the recognizable and familiar continuously entertaining. Every moment is made interesting in itself besides being a necessary link in the story, and there are many excellent, well-observed and amusing character-sketches.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Programmes are changing in London; the only three left to mention are about as different as they could be—*He Who Must Die* (6/11/57), *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (16/10/57), and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57).

Most notable release—*A Face in the Crowd* (30/10/57). Otherwise nothing much but the rather pedestrian *The One That Got Away* (23/10/57)—except for the reissue of an entertaining old one, *The Captain's Paradise* (24/6/53).

RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR



Top Table Talk

THE B.B.C.'s "Lifeline" series is the result of crossing "The Brains Trust" with the Edana Romney-Edgar Lustgarten agony column, "Is This Your Problem?" It promises to be one of the most profitable sessions on the air.

I cannot hope to hear a better all-round discussion than that trotted out by the anonymous consultant psychiatrist ("You know," I heard someone at the butcher's say, "the one with the gimlet eyes"), Raymond Firth, Christmas Humphreys, Canon Eric Heaton and Hugh Trevor-Roper. The question before the team was important: what, asked the human guinea-pig of the evening, a young man half in love with faith and out of love with dogma, do I do to be saved? In the end he was advised to proceed with a stiff upper-lip, according to the tenets of scientific humanism, but before this compromise situation was reached the panel romped gaily and enthusiastically through a maze of instructive disputation.

Canon Heaton played the fighting parson with gusto; Trevor-Roper, truculent and ironical, urged doubters to wear their organized religion lightly like "a loose-fitting garment"; Firth was erudite and brilliantly persuasive; Humphreys extolled human reason and the essential mysticism of man's role in the universe. All spoke well, and the consultant psychiatrist's summing-up was masterly.

But why must there always be a summing-up? It is wrong surely to allow the structure of these programmes to



Lifeline

suggest that half an hour's earnest discussion can be resolved into a piece of practical advice, a workable compromise. The lesson that should emerge from these intensive Brains Trust sessions is that moral good cannot be dispensed from a medicine cabinet.

I urge Hugh Burnett, who produces these admirable programmes, to cut the vestigial associations with "Is This Your Problem?" and drop the guinea-pig.

Malcolm Muggeridge's review of "The Thirties" was a splendid demonstration of the potential vitality of television. The raw material of the programme was so much dross, a bundle of old newsreel films and one off-stage voice—drugs on the television market. Yet by careful and witty editing the film was made as consequential as a Hollywood feature. The commentary, laconic and ironic, was a perfectly synchronized sound-track.

Very few people, I imagine, would agree wholly with Muggeridge's slant—a simple division of mankind into fascist thugs and British mugs. It is quite true that most of our politicians in the 'thirties were misguided, incompetent or stupid, but so too—if awareness of Hitler's intentions is made the acid test—were the politicians of France, Russia and America, most of the social leaders in Germany and certainly more than half of the ordinary peoples of the Western world. It is democracy's weakness, being sane, that it can never budget adequately for the madness inherent in other forms of government.

Muggeridge's film succeeded because it was exciting, literary, and provocative—rare qualities indeed on the little screen.

And it was probably the cheapest hour of compelling television the B.B.C. has ever put over.

Which brings me to "Television Tomorrow," a discussion by Sir Kenneth Clark, Dr. Hilde Himmelweit, Dr. J. Bronowski, Dr. Glynne Wickham and Robert McKenzie, to celebrate TV's coming of age. I found this a dreadful disappointment. The speakers dealt almost exclusively with topical side-issues; what was needed was speculation and advice on the shape of TV to come, on the need for competition at all levels between the B.B.C. and the I.T.A., plans for a television Third and Network Three, and—even more important—the impact of the medium on education, the press, propaganda, industrial relations, and social mores.

Television is here to stay. Fact-facing has hardly begun.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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